

THE  
EXPLOITATION OF EAST AFRICA  
1856-1890

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The Slave Trade and the Scramble

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by  
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FABER AND FABER LIMITED  
24 Russell Square  
London

*First published in June Mcmxxxix  
by Faber and Faber Limited  
24 Russell Square London W.C. 1  
Printed in Great Britain by  
R. MacLehose and Company Limited  
The University Press Glasgow  
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## PREFACE

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This study of East African history from 1856 to 1890 is also a study of Sir John Kirk's career at Zanzibar. From a British standpoint, indeed, the two are almost identical; and it is mainly from Sir John's remarkable dispatches that the narrative has been built up.

I am deeply indebted to his son, Lt.-Col. J. W. C. Kirk, for placing a wealth of printed and manuscript material at my disposal, and to his daughters, Mrs. Wright, Mrs. Bevington and Mrs. Marett, for similar assistance and encouragement. Lady Hunt has also kindly allowed me to make use of Horace Waller's papers.

My thanks are again due to Sir Claud Hollis, Mr. R. H. Crofton, and Mr. W. T. Ottewill for helping me with this book as they did with its predecessor. But my greatest obligation is to Mr. J. Simmons, whose fortitude and judgment in clearing my path through the jungle of primary materials have been worthy of the best traditions of African exploration.

R. C.

WOOTTON HILL,  
*April 1939.*



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*PART ONE*

THE END OF THE ARAB SLAVE TRADE





## SEYYID SAID IN EAST AFRICA

In the second half of the nineteenth century the Colonial Powers of Europe took possession of almost all mid-Africa—the tropical belt between the Sahara and the Zambesi. East and West, it was an equally easy achievement. Nowhere were there any forces, other than those of Nature, which could offer serious or sustained resistance to the wealth and equipment of European nations. Their only substantial difficulty arose from their own rivalry, from quarrels, flaming up nearly at times but never quite into war, about their respective shares of African soil. But, if it was roughly the same story everywhere, there was one great difference in the way it was unfolded in East Africa and in West. On the west coast Europe had only Africans to deal with. On the east coast she found that Asia had forestalled her and was already in possession. She was confronted with the Arab state of Zanzibar.

This state was the creation of a great Arab, Said-bin-Sultan. In 1806, when he started his remarkable career by usurping the sovereignty of Muscat, mid-East Africa was almost unknown outside the orbit of the western Indian Ocean. Arabs and Indians had traded there from the dawn of history, and the Arab colonies planted along the coast from the beginning of the eighth century A.D. onwards had once been thriving little 'city-states', exporting African products to Arabia, Persia and India and importing manufactured goods therefrom. But their prosperity had been blighted in the sixteenth century by subjection to the political control and economic monopoly of the Portuguese; and when after some hundred and fifty years of decline and decay the Portuguese Empire in the East collapsed, they

had regained their independence north of Mozambique but little else. Ruined walls and forts and mosques, deserted sites of once populous towns now fast going 'back to the jungle', bore witness to a standard of wealth and civilisation that was lost beyond recovery. Never again would Arab travellers write, for all the learned world to read, about the fine houses and gardens, the crowded harbours, the gold and silver and silken garments of Arab East Africa. Even the independence of the Arab colonies was not quite as complete as it once had been. The Imam of Muscat who, backed by the fierce sea-faring folk of Oman, had taken the lead in their deliverance from the Portuguese, had asserted his own overlordship and levied tribute as the price of his protection: and his successors had claimed, though they had not effectively or regularly exercised, the same rights of suzerainty.

It was by enforcing these rights that Said acquired his East African 'dominions', as they were termed in the language of international diplomacy. Having spent the first half of his reign in securing his position in south-east Arabia—as far as it was possible to secure it against such militant or predatory neighbours as the Wahabi of the desert or the Jawasmi of the Persian Gulf—he spent the second half in establishing a new political and economic system in East Africa. By force or guile he obtained the submission of all the Arab towns along the coast and on the adjacent islands between Warsheikh in the north and Cape Delgado in the south. At the more important of them he appointed Governors as his personal representatives, supported by little garrisons from his small mercenary army. But the rights of intervention or control implicit in Said's overlordship were never defined, and in practice the Arab townsmen were allowed as a rule to manage their local affairs under their own traditional sheikhs or sultans. Apart from an occasional interference in disputes or a reference to Said's ultimate judicial authority, the Governors did little more than collect the quota which Said levied on the customs-dues collected at each port. But the substantial measure of autonomy thus conceded was only local. Just as Said's overlordship protected the Arab towns from external attack, so it precluded them from any independent relationship with foreign States.

Except in the north, in Somaliland, the subjects of this over-

lordship, the townsmen of the coast, were Arabs or Swahili—the name of the mixed Arab and African race, which now far outnumbered the dwindling remnant of pure Arabs, and of the similarly mixed language which had long taken the place of Arabic along the maritime belt. But in the north, at Barawa, Merka and Mogadishu, the original Arab colonies had been dominated and in course of time absorbed by the warlike Somali tribesmen of the countryside. In blood and speech, in custom and character, their inhabitants in Said's day were predominantly Somali; and among such martial and free-spirited folk the acceptance of Said's suzerainty was more a matter of acquiescence or convenience than submission: he could never have enforced it. But the Somali and their southern neighbours, the Galla, were, broadly speaking, the only formidable African peoples on the coast. The dreaded Masai dwelt near Mounts Kenya and Kilimanjaro on the western side of the Nyika, the arid thorn-covered wilderness which lies between the maritime belt and the interior. The primitive Bantu tribes along the coast, amongst whom the blood and speech and Moslem faith of the Swahili were steadily spreading, had never been strong enough to question the right of Asiatics from overseas to invade and colonise their country. The Arabs for their part made no attempt to govern them. They sold cloth and wire and beads to them and bought their foodstuffs. They employed them as porters for their caravans. Otherwise they left them more or less alone, since most of their need for labour was met by slaves obtained from the interior. Only one tribe or group of tribes had sufficient political coherence and organisation to deal with the Arabs on anything like equal terms. In the course of its expansion the kingdom of Usambara, centred in a range of mountains some fifty miles from the sea, had extended its control over the people of the coast opposite Pemba island. A conflict between African and Arab might well have resulted: but neither Said nor Kimweri, the capable paramount-chief of the Shambaa at that time, desired to exercise complete sovereignty over that small area. By tacit agreement Kimweri appointed his officials and tax-collectors for the villages and Said his customs-officers at the ports.

Government, in fact, was only a secondary factor in Said's East African *régime*. He was a brave but unsuccessful soldier.

His methods of administration were of almost patriarchal simplicity. It was to commerce, to the enrichment of himself and his realm, that he gave most of his subtle and sagacious mind: he was, above all else, a merchant-prince. He attempted, therefore, to exercise over his dominions only that minimum of political control which was required for the maintenance of his economic system. The success of that system, far more than any triumphs of diplomacy or statesmanship, won him the place he holds in history.

There were six main threads in his economic policy. In the first place he amplified the monetary system by the introduction of a small copper coinage from India to supplement the existing silver currency—'Maria Theresa' dollars and Spanish crowns.<sup>1</sup> Secondly, he simplified the customs system. All imports into his African dominions were charged a regular duty of 5%. There were no export duties, and practically no other form of taxation. Thirdly, he exploited the high fertility of Zanzibar and Pemba islands by encouraging, almost indeed enforcing, the plantation of cloves. Fourthly, he revived and greatly extended the old Arab caravan-trade with the African interior by means of which African products, especially ivory and slaves, were obtained, partly, as in the case of slaves, to supply the local demand at Zanzibar and the Arab coast towns, but mainly for export at a high profit oversea. Fifthly, he warmly welcomed the first incursions of the western business-world into the East African backwater it had consistently ignored and avoided since the early days of the Portuguese Empire. He concluded commercial treaties with the United States in 1833, with Great Britain in 1839, and with France in 1844, which, except along a stretch of the coast opposite Zanzibar known as the Mrima, granted to the merchants of those countries the same freedom of trade at all Said's African ports as that enjoyed by his own subjects and provided for the establishment of consulates at Zanzibar. Similar encouragement was given to German enterprise, though a commercial treaty with the Hanseatic States was not concluded till after Said's death. Last, but not least, he fostered the growth of the Indian community at Zanzibar not only by giving them complete religious, social and economic freedom but also by personal relationships with some of their

<sup>1</sup> Exchange value from  $4\frac{1}{2}$  to  $4\frac{3}{4}$  to the pound sterling.

ablest men and the use of their services in administration and finance. And this he did for the good reason that the Arabs in general lacked the aptitude and the industry needed for the management of business. Indeed in Said's day, and probably for many generations before it, nearly all the business of Arab East Africa—the banking, the financing of commercial enterprise, the wholesale and even most of the retail trade—was in Indian hands.

Such in outline was the policy which Said pursued in East Africa between 1830 and 1856. Its results were impressive. His primary objective was triumphantly attained: he multiplied his African revenue ten times. Zanzibar grew from an insignificant little town, rarely visited by shipping except for taking in water and provisions, to be the principal port on the western shores of the Indian Ocean, the chief *entrepôt* for Afro-Asiatic trade, the source of almost all the world's supply of cloves, the place where more ivory and gum-copal could be bought than anywhere else, the biggest slave-market in the East, a focus, finally, if only as yet in a minor degree, of international interest where the consuls of three great western peoples flew their flags and the merchants of four maintained their houses of business. This growth of Zanzibar in wealth and importance was not, of course, the outcome, except as regards the clove-trade, of its own insular resources. It was mainly due to the rapid and far-reaching penetration of the African mainland. The old trade-routes into the interior had been extended farther westwards and new ones opened up. By 1856 Arab caravans, much more numerous now and larger and better equipped, had reached the Great Lakes—Nyasa, Tanganyika and Victoria Nyanza; and adventurous traders were pressing on beyond them in quest of ivory or slaves towards the upper reaches of the Congo and the Nile. Since expeditions of such length meant an absence of two years or more from the coast, little inland settlements had been established at central points or crossways of trade. On the great route from Bagamoyo to Lake Tanganyika there was a regular Arab colony or township at Tabora, substantial permanent trade-posts at Masansa and Ujiji, and lesser ones at intervals on the way up from the coast. All this meant a wide extension of Said's authority. The itinerant Arab merchants did not annex the country they passed through. As on the coast,

so in the interior, their relations with the Africans were primarily commercial. They might make friends with a tribe in order to buy ivory and slaves from it or attack a tribe in order to enslave it; but otherwise they left the natives to their own devices. Nevertheless, armed as they were with muskets, they were usually, if not quite always, the masters of the country through which they marched or in which they set up their trade-posts: and, since they all acknowledged allegiance to their overlord at Zanzibar, it might be held that Said had extended his dominions, in this somewhat tenuous and elastic manner, from the maritime belt to the Great Lakes. It was significant, for example, that the European explorers and missionaries, who in Said's later years were just beginning to invade the East African *hinterland*, invariably asked for Said's blessing on their ventures and obtained from him what was virtually a passport—a letter of recommendation to ensure, as it always did ensure, that the bearer was welcomed and aided on his way by all Arabs or Swahili he might meet inland.

As the result of this highly successful essay in 'economic imperialism', Seyyid Said became one of the leading figures in the Arab world. But his power was not as great as his prestige. The stronger he had grown in East Africa, the weaker he had grown in Oman. To maintain his authority in both fields at the same time was a difficult task, especially since the voyage between them, one way for half the year and the other way for the other half, was made almost impossible for sailing ships by the prevailing winds. He had seen the difficulty at the outset and chosen to face it. So determined was he to pursue his African ambitions that, for that reason first and foremost among several, he had actually shifted his seat of government from Muscat to Zanzibar. That was in 1840, and by 1856 the result was plain. In East Africa his authority was normally unquestioned, but in Oman his long absences had consistently meant trouble. At regular intervals he had been summoned back from Zanzibar to save his throne and homeland from external attack or internal intrigue and disaffection. More than once, indeed, he would not have saved them if the British Government in India had not come to his help; and when he did recover his grip of Oman unaided, it was more by prestige than power: his personal authority was unique; and it may well have been his realisation

of that fact that determined him to arrange for the partition of his swollen realm at his death between two of his sons. Which section he himself preferred was obvious enough. Before he died Said was already much more Sultan of Zanzibar than of Muscat.

## 2

It remains to consider the international position of Said's dominions.

The downfall of the Portuguese Empire had not freed the Asiatic States on the coasts of the western Indian Ocean from the menace of European imperialism. Dutchmen, Frenchmen and Englishmen were soon at work in the field vacated by the Portuguese. In course of time the Dutch had concentrated their energies on the East Indies, leaving France and Britain to fight for supremacy in India and on the seas around it. Between 1756 and 1815, as the outcome of three wars, the issue was decided. Britain established her command of the seas and fortified it by the acquisition of Cape Colony, Ceylon, Île de France (renamed Mauritius) and the Seychelles. But the French were not excluded, as they could have been excluded, from this area. The settlement of 1814-15 left them in possession of a foothold on the western coast of India at Mahé and, more important, the island of Bourbon (renamed Réunion in 1848) and two or three trading-posts on the coast of Madagascar. Elsewhere Britain with her irresistible sea-power could interfere, control, annex virtually when and where she wished. But France was still in the arena, weakened for the moment, but bound to recover sooner or later her strength and her ambitions.

Said's reign began in 1806 when the Franco-British conflict was entering its final phase. The strategic position of Oman, commanding the entrance to the Persian Gulf and the 'overland route' between India and the Mediterranean and within striking distance of the sea route between Suez and Bombay, had already involved his country in the diplomatic reactions of the great European struggle. Napoleon's designs on India had impelled the British Indian governments to look beyond their borders and strengthen their influence over neighbouring rulers to the west. Treaties were concluded with Said's predecessor,

Sultan-bin-Ahmed, in 1798 and 1800 which conceded to the British a privileged position in Oman. No foothold at any point of Sultan's realm was to be conceded to the French or Dutch, but the British were to be permitted to establish a 'factory' at Bunder Abbas. A British resident, moreover, was to be stationed at Muscat. To these engagements Said had adhered; but, as long as the ultimate outcome of the war remained in doubt, he had naturally done all he could not to alienate the French. He maintained the old-standing trade between Muscat and Port Louis, and in 1807, with the knowledge and the acquiescence of the British Indian authorities, he negotiated a commercial treaty with the Governor of Île de France which provided *inter alia* for the establishment of a French agent at Muscat side by side with the British. A few years later the need for 'hedging' disappeared. After the fall of Port Louis in 1811 it became clear that France was losing the long fight; and thenceforward Said's choice between the rival Powers was never in doubt. Indeed he scarcely had a choice. It was a minor, if important, point that access for his trade to British Indian ports was much more valuable than the similar concessions he obtained at the surviving French possessions by renewing with Bourbon the old commercial ties with Île de France. Far more decisive was the political question—the safety and independence of his realm. One of its two parts was always in danger from his enemies in Asia: the other might at any time be threatened by a new impulse of imperialism in Europe. Against the first risk the British were his natural allies. The maintenance of the *status quo* in the Persian Gulf as a British 'sphere of influence' was a keystone of British policy; and it was more than likely, therefore, that Britain would prohibit a Wahabi or a Persian or an Egyptian occupation of Muscat. As regards the second danger, if Britain, not contented with the gains of 1815, should want to extend her territorial possessions on the coasts of the Indian Ocean at Said's expense, then France, as things were, would be unable to prevent it. But, if France were the aggressor—and this was more probable, since she was bound to desire some compensation for the losses of 1815—then Britain could, if she would, throw the shield of her sea-power over Said's realm.

Time proved that Said's calculations were correct. In the Arabian field, though the British, playing for safety, refused to



convert the old *entente* with Oman into the alliance Said longed for, it was they who finally broke the power of the Jawasmi in 1819, who saved him from Wahabi domination in 1833, and who forced the retreat of Mahomet Ali's armies in 1839. The European danger was slower to materialise. More Europeans began to find their way into Said's corner of the Indian Ocean, but, for some twenty-five years after 1815, their object was not (except for one transient incident) political. India still held the lead in the volume of trade with Zanzibar, but from about 1830 onwards the share of western nations in it steadily increased. Of these nations, in 1840, the Americans were first, the French second, the Germans third, the British, apart from British India, nowhere. This invasion by western business was not only innocuous in itself; it was profitable to Said; only once was it accompanied by a political invasion, by an occupation of Said's territory. In 1824 Captain Owen, at the request of the Arab rulers of Mombasa, then in rebellion against Said's overlordship, established on his own initiative a British protectorate over the coastland from Mombasa to the River Pangani. Said promptly protested to the British authorities in India and in London, and after some delay Owen's action was countermanded, the flag he had hoisted at Mombasa hauled down, and the little British garrison withdrawn. The moral of this incident was plain—for, if Britain had wanted territory in mid-East Africa, she could easily have kept what Owen had obtained—and it was confirmed by later developments. Britain, it is true, was not wholly content, as time went on, with the acquisitions of 1815. In 1839 she annexed Aden, in 1846 Natal, in 1857 Perim. But, except for the little Kuria Muria Islands off the Arabian coast acquired from Said in 1854 for the sake of the guano they contained, no wish was expressed nor attempt made to add an acre of Said's dominions to the British Empire. As had always been probable, it was from a revival of French imperialism, not an extension of British, that the real threat came. Between 1840 and 1843 the French, advancing from their base at Bourbon, occupied the island of Nossi-bé on the north-west coast of Madagascar and the island of Mayotta in the Comoro group between Madagascar and the African mainland; and in the course of the next decade they took soundings northwards as far as Barawa with a view to

establishing a foothold on the coast. That they failed in attaining the latter objective was once more Britain's doing. British interest coincided with good faith. To permit a French occupation of East Africa would not only betray a friendship for which Said, as will be seen, had already paid and was soon again to pay a heavy price, it would weaken the British command of the Red Sea route to India. A French Mombasa would go far to counteract the British Aden. So Palmerston made it clear that Britain was concerned to maintain the integrity of Said's dominions. That could not save Nossi-bé or Mayotta, since Said's claim that his overlordship covered them was insubstantial; but it undoubtedly saved Said's hold on all the coast from Cape Delgado to Somaliland.

## 3

The price which Said had to pay for British friendship, which meant in the last resort the safeguarding of his realm and independence by British sea-power, was his submission to British demands for the restriction of the Slave Trade. The character and extent of this traffic, by means of which some thousands of Africans were obtained every year from the interior and sold into slavery at Zanzibar and the Arab coast towns or in Oman and the neighbouring parts of Asia, will be described in Chapter VII. But a brief account must be given here of the manner in which Said had become involved in the extension of 'the unwearied, unostentatious, and inglorious crusade of England against Slavery' from Europe and the Atlantic to Asia and the Indian Ocean. By the abolition of Slavery in the British Isles in 1772-4, of the British Slave Trade in 1808, and of Slavery in the British colonies in 1834, by cajoling, badgering and bribing other European nations to enact laws against the Slave Trade and to enforce, or allow Britain to enforce, their execution, and by maintaining naval patrols for the prevention of slave smuggling on both sides of the Atlantic, the British people—and from 1790 onwards it was a genuinely popular movement—had done all they could do to destroy the slave system in the West. In the East it was more old-established, more widespread and more difficult to combat; but from 1807 onwards a series of attacks had been made on it. The prohibition of the

Slave Trade was enforced in British India, and the protected Indian rulers on the north-west coast induced to follow suit; treaties for the suppression of the Trade were concluded with Persia and the Arab tribes of the Persian Gulf; and in 1843 the legal status of Slavery was abolished in British India. But these repressive measures were only concerned with the countries into which slaves were imported; and no efforts to end the Trade could succeed unless measures were also taken in the countries of export. As long, in fact, as slaves were obtainable, somehow or other they would be obtained, at any rate in countries less amenable to British control than India, whatever treaties might be signed or orders issued by their signatories. That at once brought Said into the picture; for the vast bulk of the slaves were Africans; the main field of supply was the area of the Great Lakes; and while some of the slaves obtained therefrom came down to the coast of Portuguese East Africa, most of them emerged at the sea-ports of Said's African dominions. Portuguese and French slave smuggling from Portuguese territory was gradually suppressed by diplomatic pressure on the Governments concerned and the vigilance of British cruisers. But that, though a difficult task, was far less difficult than the task at Zanzibar. France and Portugal had not only outlawed the Slave Trade: they were not Slave States. Though something akin to Slavery was introduced for a time in Réunion under the guise of the 'Free Labour Emigration System', they could not plead that Slavery was an essential part of their social system. Therein, on the other hand, lay the strength of Said's case. The abolition of the Trade would not only involve the loss of the biggest item in his customs revenue and of the most lucrative source of livelihood open to his subjects, it would lead in course of time to the disappearance throughout his realm, in Oman as in Africa, of an institution on which Arab society had been based from the dawn of history. In Said's day, indeed, all Arabs took Slavery as much for granted as the Prophet had taken it for granted in the Koran. Individual slaves might be freed and their owners acquire merit thereby, but that all slaves should be freed, that the institution of Slavery itself should ever come to an end was almost inconceivable.

Fortunately for Said the abolition of the whole slave system in East Africa was necessarily a gradual business. However

high-handed British Governments might be, they could not destroy the Slave Trade and Slavery at one stroke. But Said had to bear the first impact of British humanitarianism on his remote old-fashioned corner of the world. It began gently when in 1812 and again in 1815 he was invited by the Government of Bombay to co-operate in the suppression of the Slave Trade. 'Your acquiescence in this proposition', he was told, 'will be extremely gratifying to the British Government.' But Said, of course, was not going to acquiesce unless he must. So stronger pressure was presently brought to bear by the Governments of Bombay and Mauritius in combination; and in the Moresby Treaty of 1822 Said yielded half of what was asked of him. He declared it quite impossible to abolish the 'internal' Trade between the various African and Asiatic parts of his dominions since the maintenance of Slavery throughout his realm depended on it; but he agreed to prohibit his subjects from engaging in the 'external' Trade between his ports and any country to the south of Cape Delgado or to the east of a line drawn from Diu Head to a point sixty miles east of Socotra. It was a costly concession and fiercely resented by Said's subjects, but, having given his word, Said kept it. Despite, however, his genuine attempts to get his prohibitory edict obeyed, the fact that slaves were still allowed to be shipped from Zanzibar and the African coast northwards to Oman made it all too easy for them to be smuggled up the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf and along the Baluchi coast. In 1845, therefore, the pressure on Said was resumed, and another treaty obtained from him which engaged him to forbid all export of slaves from his African dominions. Thus, while slaves could still circulate between Zanzibar and the Arab coast-towns, they could not legally be shipped to Oman.

'You have put on me', Said constantly complained, 'a heavier load than I can bear.' That he did bear it was largely due to the trust that he had learned to place in the sincerity of Captain Hamerton, the British consul and political agent at Zanzibar from 1841 to 1857, whose task it was to convey to Said the desires and intentions of his Government. When Hamerton told him that Britain wished to preserve the integrity of his realm, he believed it. When Hamerton told him that Britain meant to destroy the Slave Trade and sooner or later

would destroy it, he believed that too, however little he might understand the reason for it. And so he did what he was asked to do. It meant, as has been said, a serious loss of revenue; and it provoked such bitterness and anger among the Arabs of East Africa that only a ruler as venerated as Said was in his later years could have brooked it. Arab society throughout its history has always been rent by faction, and even at Zanzibar there was a recalcitrant minority, headed by the arrogant el-Harthi tribe, which questioned Said's authority and criticised his policy. There had always been Arabs, moreover, at Zanzibar as in earlier days at Muscat, who favoured France rather than Britain; and the French Government, it was understood, was not itching like the British to meddle with the Arab Slave Trade. So Said's surrender united two strains of opposition. When the harsh restrictions of the second treaty began to make themselves felt, there was talk of a *coup d'état*, of appealing for French intervention, even of satisfying the known French desire for a foothold on the African coast, if only British interference with Arab customs and Arab money-making could be stopped and the old freedom of the Slave Trade recovered. But Said did not waver. Because he put the independence of his realm above all else, he clung to British friendship to the end. As he lay half-conscious on his deathbed, he called again and again for Hamerton.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The subject matter of this chapter is treated in detail in the author's *East Africa and its Invaders* (Oxford, 1938), especially chapters vii, x, xi, xvi and xvii. For a sketch of the British attack on the slave system as a whole, see the author's *The British Anti-Slavery Movement* (Home University Library, 1933).

## II

# THE INDEPENDENCE OF ZANZIBAR (1856-1861)

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### I

Said died in October 1856, and was succeeded in the rulership of his African realm by Majid, his third surviving son, born of one of his many 'secondary' wives, a Circassian. Of frail physique, subject from early childhood to epileptic fits, nervous, moody, shiftily, it was a question from the outset whether he would be able to keep the throne his father had assigned to him.<sup>1</sup> Danger from three quarters, as has been seen, had threatened Said. In Oman, apart from Wahabi aggression against which in the last resort he could count on British aid, he was constantly exposed to dissension and intrigue among his restless tribesmen. At Zanzibar, the wealthy leaders of the el-Harthi tribe, with several hundred slaves at their command, had always been rebels at heart, though never strong enough openly to question Said's authority. And in the background, with their base at Réunion, the French were trying to secure a dominant influence at Zanzibar and, if possible, a foothold on the African coast. Natural capacity, long experience and great prestige had enabled Said to cope with this triple danger; but Majid had none of those advantages, and in each of its three quarters the danger was inevitably enhanced by Said's death.

To free Zanzibar from turbulent Oman had been one of the reasons for Said's decision to divide his realm; but it was not the custom of Arab rulers to respect their fathers' wishes, and Majid's elder brother, Thwain, was not by any means content

<sup>1</sup> Said had intended another son, Khalid, to succeed him at Zanzibar, but he died in 1854.

with his portion of the heritage, the sovereignty of Muscat. He quickly set himself to undo the partition and to reunite East Africa with Oman under his single control. It was an intelligible ambition. The acquisition of East Africa would mean a great increase not merely of power and prestige for the Sultan of Muscat, but, more important, of wealth. As the result of Said's masterly economic policy the African section of his realm had become far more productive than the Arabian section. The revenue of Zanzibar in 1860 was 206,000 crowns (about £43,000), and that of Muscat was 129,000 crowns (about £27,000)—so great a difference that at the outset of his reign Majid tried to buy off Thwain's hostility by promising him an annual gift or 'subsidy' of 40,000 crowns. And Thwain could make a case. He claimed, in the first place, that, when Said appointed one son as Governor of Muscat and another as Governor of Zanzibar, it was only for administrative convenience at the time and did not imply the division of the realm on their father's death. He claimed, secondly, that in any case Arab custom gave Said as ruler of Muscat no right to separate East Africa from Oman—a decision which could only be taken by the Omani people—and that through his election by the Omani people to the rulership of the 'parent State' he, Thwain, became the lawful ruler of all Said's realm. He claimed, thirdly, that the 'tribute', as he termed it, which Majid had paid to him was an acknowledgment of Zanzibar's dependency on Muscat. That case, as will be seen, could be answered; but *prima facie* it was a strong case, and Thwain could rally in support of it all those Omani who resented the growth of Zanzibar in prosperity and importance, who had deplored Said's favouring it at Muscat's expense, and who regarded Arab East Africa as, so to speak, a colonial area over which the motherland should enforce its authority.<sup>1</sup>

At Zanzibar the crisis occasioned by Said's death was no less grave, and it came to a head more quickly. Thwain was not the only brother of Majid who contested his father's dispensation. A younger brother, Barghash, a bolder, stronger man than Majid, also thought himself entitled to make a bid for the

<sup>1</sup> Revenue: *Proceedings of the Commission on the Disputes between the Rulers of Muscat and Zanzibar* (Bombay, 1861), 66. Thwain's case as stated to the Commission: *ibid.* 12-13.

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vacant throne. Said, as it happened, had taken Barghash with him on his last visit to Muscat; and he might well have left him there if he could have foreseen his own death in the course of the voyage back to Zanzibar. For Barghash was thus enabled to attempt a *coup d'état*. He timed the arrival of the ship at dusk, concealed the fact of Said's death, took the body ashore at dead of night and buried it secretly, and then endeavoured, before day broke and the news was known, to seize the fort and gather round him a body of dissident Arabs with the el-Harthi at their head prepared to acclaim him as their ruler. The plot was thwarted by two men. The loyal *jemadar* of the Baluchi garrison refused Barghash entry to the fort; and Consul Hamerton firmly told the el-Harthi leader who came to sound his opinion that, if he attempted to disturb the peace, his head would fall within twenty-four hours. Meantime the demeanour of the mass of the Arab and Swahili population, their veneration for Said deepened by the sudden sense of loss, made it clear that their choice of a ruler was Said's choice. But, if Barghash was thus disappointed, he was not disheartened: he bided his time. And the el-Harthi, who were playing their own hand and were no readier, as a matter of fact, to acquiesce in Barghash's rule or Thwain's than in Said's, continued their intrigues behind the scenes. They can scarcely have sorrowed much when, before a year was out, Hamerton's death (July 5, 1857) removed its strongest personality from the political life of Zanzibar and left the British consulate vacant.<sup>1</sup>

The danger of French intervention, likewise, was increased by Said's death. It offered French diplomacy a chance of undermining, even of overthrowing, the ascendancy which British diplomacy had established at Zanzibar. Said's successor might be persuaded to reverse Said's policy, to regard the friendship of France as no less useful than the friendship of Britain, and to think the price of it a cheaper price. As long, therefore, as the succession was not settled beyond dispute, M. Ladislav Cochet, the French consul, was busy fishing in troubled waters.

On all counts, then, it was a difficult position for the new

<sup>1</sup> For the plot and its outcome, see *East Africa and its Invaders*, 553-4. For the desire of the el-Harthi to 'get rid of the whole family of the late Imam and thus obtain possession of the government' themselves, see *Disputes Commission*, 97.



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ruler, and it was made more difficult by Hamerton's death. As his father's heir, with his father's friends and counsellors about him, Majid was committed to the traditional pro-British policy; but even Said could scarcely have maintained that policy without a representative of the British Government at his side. During the year and three weeks, therefore, which elapsed between Hamerton's death and the arrival of his successor, Rigby, Majid became more and more anxious and low-spirited. 'When shall I see a flag hoisted there again?' he would say, pointing at the bare flagstaff at the British Consulate. When traders from Bombay or Aden called at Zanzibar, he would send and inquire privately if it was known when the new consul would arrive. And when at last, on July 27, 1858, Rigby did arrive, Majid told him at once and repeatedly—and bade him tell his Government—how glad he was to have a British resident again at Zanzibar. Events were soon to justify his anxiety and his relief.<sup>1</sup>

### 2

Captain Christopher Palmer Rigby was only 38 years old when he came to Zanzibar, but twenty of those years he had already spent in the East as an officer in the Indian Army—first at Poona, Belgaum and Bombay, from 1840 to 1843 at newly-occupied Aden, then for a time at Khandesh, and from 1854 onwards in the Persian Gulf. Compared with torrid Aden or Bushire, the little green coral-island of Zanzibar seemed almost a paradise, and Rigby's diary and correspondence soon overflowed with tributes to its charm.

'The climate is really delightful here now, the air is so clear and pure, and no heat all day. I take long rambles over the island every morning. It is the very perfection of rich tropical scenery. Here nothing is dry and parched up as in India. The country is ever fresh and blooming; the ground gently undulating for miles is like a fine park, with soft green turf and clumps of large mango-trees, groves of oranges, cloves, etc. . . . The evenings at this season are lovely, so cool, calm and bright.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> C. E. B. Russell (Rigby's daughter), *General Rigby, Zanzibar and the Slave Trade* (London, 1935), 106.

<sup>2</sup> Russell, 72, 86. The island is 54 miles long and 24 broad. Its area is about the same as that of Denbighshire.

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At first, too, the human aspect of Zanzibar seemed not unpleasant. The Sultan was 'very civil', and called on Rigby alone of the four consuls—a marked acknowledgment of British ascendancy. M. Cochet gave him 'a dinner that would have done credit to the Café de Paris, with about a dozen different sorts of wine'. He thought the American consul, W. G. Webb, an ex-Captain of the U.S. navy, 'a very good fellow'; and in a subsequent dispatch he spoke of him as 'a gentleman who has at all times shown a most friendly feeling to the British'. But Albrecht O'Swald, the Hanseatic agent, whose house was next his own, seems to have been the solitary Englishman's best friend. Altogether those first few months went smoothly. 'I like my work at Zanzibar', wrote Rigby in his diary on the last day of 1858, 'and foresee a great future for the country if wisely governed.'<sup>1</sup>

Not many days after Rigby recorded those happy first impressions, the storm-clouds which had hung over the island since Said's death suddenly broke; and at once the triple threat to Majid's authority materialised. In the middle of January 1859 the news arrived that Thwain was about to launch an attack on Zanzibar and assert his claims to Said's dominions in East Africa by force. The more adventurous members of the el-Harthi tribe, in touch, no doubt, with friends at Muscat, promptly began to organise a rising against Majid to coincide with the arrival of Thwain's fleet. Barghash was suspected of having received a heavy bribe from Thwain. 'This Barghash', wrote Rigby, 'is a sullen, morose, discontented character. He has never called on me, and detests all Europeans, but the French have made a fool of him.' And the French? Their consul, at any rate, made no secret of his hopes. When it was reported, to quote Rigby again, that Thwain's expedition had actually set sail from Muscat, Cochet 'could not conceal his joy. He openly abused Seyyid Majid in the foulest terms, said that he was a *poule mouillée*, that not a shot would be fired in his favour, that Seyyid Thwain would quickly land and assume the government; and asked me what I intended doing on his arrival.' But Cochet's estimate of public opinion was mistaken. The great majority of the Arabs and Swahili of the island maintained the loyalty they had shown to Majid at the time of his

<sup>1</sup> Russell, 72-8, 92 note 2.

accession. And the same was true of the townsfolk on the African coast. Never before, indeed, had the unity of their little world been so clearly demonstrated. Excited by rumours of impending trouble they came in hundreds and presently in thousands from all up and down the coast and from the Comoro Islands to protect the town which Said had made their capital and the prince whom Said had chosen to be their overlord. As the weeks went by and the uncertainty and tension grew, less reputable Arabs poured in from the Arabian coast—the notorious 'Northern Arabs' who came every year with the change of the prevailing wind to disturb the peace and break the laws of Zanzibar. Fierce freebooters, they owned no sort of allegiance to Majid; and their presence stiffened the determination of the loyal Arabs to keep East Africa independent of Oman. The demonstrations, therefore, which kept the town in tumult day after day and night after night, the beflagged processions, the shrill music, the discharge of loaded muskets (often with fatal results)—it was all or most of it for Majid, not for Thwain; and if the British consulate in particular suffered from the noisy amiability of the mob, it was because Rigby and his Government were believed to be on Majid's side.<sup>1</sup>

Majid, meantime, was preparing to resist the threatened attack. 'The Governor of the town,' noted Rigby in his diary, 'Seyyid Suliman-bin-Ali, son-in-law of the late Imam, called on me to consult as to the measures to be taken.' Of these the most effective was the refurbishing of Majid's little navy of five warships, headed by the *Shah Allum* which carried 44 guns and a crew of 700 men, and reinforced by the *Artémise* which arrived from the Comoro Islands with the Sultan of Mohilla in command and 150 men 'drilled in the French style'. Rigby himself sent an urgent request to Johanna for a ship of the Cape squadron to come at once to Zanzibar. Meanwhile he obtained muskets for his staff and servants and set himself to manufacture cartridges. And indeed, whether Thwain appeared or not, these precautions were needed. Every day the town grew more crowded—Rigby put the total inflow at 25,000—and more turbulent. To add to the confusion, bands of armed slaves came

<sup>1</sup> Rigby's account in Russell, 78-9, 107-8, and in *Disputes Commission*, 65, 102. Majid's version, *ibid.* 120.

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in from the country and paraded the streets. Loss of life was frequent by accident or design.<sup>1</sup>

At last, in the middle of March, it was reported that Thwain's fleet had sailed from Muscat. The news so animated Barghash that one night after dark he discharged a volley of shots at the boat in which Majid was being rowed past his house at the harbour-side. But Barghash, like Cochet, had been too impulsive. On March 24 one Omani dhow arrived, and no more. Its occupants were arrested without a blow. It was learned afterwards that other dhows had put in for food and water at various towns on the coast, and, finding them all loyal to Majid, had likewise surrendered. What, then, had happened to Thwain's long-meditated expedition? The answer was obtained when on March 22 the British frigate, H.M.S. *Assaye*, cast anchor at Zanzibar.<sup>2</sup> It appeared that the British authorities in India had determined, rather late in the day, to prevent the outbreak of a little Arab war in the north-west corner of the Indian Ocean. When the Government of Bombay were informed by their acting 'native agent' at Muscat that Thwain was intending shortly to sail for Zanzibar 'to fight his brother and take that place from him', they promptly dispatched a political officer, Colonel Russell, in H.M.S. *Punjaub* to intercept the expedition. He was only just in time. Thwain left Muscat with his three larger ships on February 11 and was nearing Ras el Hadd when on the 14th he found the *Punjaub* barring his way. Russell was firm. 'With a view to exhibiting my sincere friendship and respect for the British Government,' wrote Thwain to the Resident in the Persian Gulf, 'I returned to Muscat.' On March 3 he sent his flagship, the *Caroline*, with a British officer on board, to recall the small craft which had got away southwards before the interception. As to his dispute with Majid, he was advised—and in the circumstances it was virtually an order—to submit it to the arbitration of the Governor-General, Lord Canning.<sup>3</sup>

To most of the Zanzibari and to Majid in particular the news

<sup>1</sup> Russell, 78, 107.

<sup>2</sup> Government of Bombay to C.-in-C. Indian Navy, 29. iv. 59: India Office Records, range 396, no. 3256.

<sup>3</sup> Agent to G. of B., 15. xii. 58: I.O.R., 396, 151. Jenkins to Jones, 4. iii. 59, enclosing Thwain to Jones, 4. iii. 59: I.O.R., 396, 3429.

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of British intervention and the presence of a British frigate were welcome enough. Tension was relaxed. The popular excitement began to die down. Arbitration, it was generally believed, would do justice to Majid's rights. But it was not to be expected that the French would passively accept a settlement which, however reasonable in method and intention, had been virtually imposed by Britain. There were French warships also in East African waters. A few days before the *Assaye*, the schooner *L'Estafette* had arrived at Zanzibar and a few days after came the corvette *Cordelière*, bringing Commodore le Vicomte Fleuriot de Langle who had been recently and significantly appointed 'Commandant of the French naval forces on the East Coast of Africa'. He found himself confronted with a *fait accompli*. Thwain had been intercepted. The *Assaye* was at Zanzibar. There was little he could do; but, with Cochet at his elbow, he determined at least to make a counter-demonstration. He obtained an audience of Majid and told him plainly that Barghash was a *protégé* of the French Government and must be properly treated, that the British had no right to interfere in the dispute with Muscat, and that the French would see to it that no foreign flag was ever hoisted over Zanzibar. Two days later de Langle and Cochet brought Barghash to the palace, made Majid shake hands with him, and placed him next the throne. These proceedings were watched by Rigby with growing indignation and anxiety. There might be little danger of an open rupture with France over Zanzibar, but there could be no peace there as long as French influence was used to support Barghash against Majid. He took the opportunity, therefore, one evening, after a friendly dinner-party on the *Cordelière*, to tell de Langle frankly what sort of a person Barghash was. He was backed by the American consul who declared that Majid ought to banish Barghash from the island and asked the Commodore outright if he intended to prevent it. The upshot of two hours' 'warm discussion' was highly satisfactory. Whatever Cochet may have thought, de Langle was persuaded that the intrigues at Zanzibar were 'not affairs for ships of war to interfere with', and he promised to abstain from further intervention. Rigby, on his part, undertook that the British naval force at Zanzibar, which had been increased by the arrival of the smaller vessels, *Persian*, *Clive* and *Lyra*, besides the *Assaye*, should be reduced. Accord-

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ingly, of the six European warships in the harbour—an unprecedented spectacle at Zanzibar—four steamed away. Only the *Clive* and *Estafette* remained. For Majid and for British policy it was a happy ending to an unpleasant international 'incident'. It may be that French complicity in the designs of Majid's enemies was not so thorough-going or so long premeditated as Rigby believed. But in the light of the evidence he adduces it is difficult to question his final judgment on the affair.

'I am certain the lucky presence of our ships here prevented them [the French] from carrying out their intrigues to dethrone the Sultan and ruin British influence. The French have for many years coveted a footing on the mainland of Africa . . . and they are backing up Seyyid Thwain hoping to get Zanzibar declared a dependency of Muscat and then obtain from him the cession of a port—Mombasa or Lamu or Barawa.'<sup>1</sup>

The way was now clear for Majid to deal with his opponents as he chose. The el-Harthi were quickly disposed of. When he arrested all their leading sheikhs, the tribesmen threatened to let loose their slaves on Zanzibar by night and fire the town, but they did not dare to do it. They had no friends among the local Arabs, and they had lost the backing of Thwain who seems to have realised that they were interested only in their own aggrandisement. For the moment, therefore, they were in a submissive mood, and presently Majid released all the imprisoned sheikhs save three on security for good behaviour. Barghash was more difficult to deal with. He was compelled to dismiss the body of retainers he had hired and armed and told he must go to Muscat. He appeared to acquiesce, but on one excuse or another he continued to postpone the date of his departure. In the interval an unscrupulous cousin of his and Majid's, Ahmed-bin-Salim, arrived from Muscat and bribed an Albanian *jemadar* of the palace-household to murder Majid. The plot was discovered and the *jemadar* arrested. It may have been a lingering hope that by some such violent means he might yet achieve his designs on his brother's throne or it may have been, as Majid himself asserted, that he was expecting the return of the *Cordelière*; but for whatever reason Barghash was

<sup>1</sup> Russell, 110-11: a vivid account by Rigby of the French proceedings at the palace and the subsequent conversation. Letters exchanged between Rigby and de Langle are printed in Appendix V, 368-83.

still in Zanzibar at the beginning of October. At last the day of his departure was fixed. On October 6 the ship chartered for his voyage by Majid was ready for him. His baggage was on board. He himself gave a solemn undertaking to depart next morning. But in the night he slipped away in disguise to a country-house, called 'Marseilles', some six miles from the town, cut down the palm-trees to make stockades, gathered the slaves from the neighbouring plantations to form a garrison, and declared himself in open rebellion.<sup>1</sup>

A few weeks earlier Rigby had informed the Bombay Government that the danger of serious trouble at Zanzibar had passed away and had duly received its commendation of his services. Thus Barghash's sudden desperate move took him by surprise. He acted promptly. The *Assaye*, as it happened, was paying another call at Zanzibar, and he asked her commander, G. N. Adams, to postpone his departure. At the palace he pressed for immediate measures against Barghash. But for five critical days Majid and his Arab advisers remained irresolute and inactive. On October 12 a half-hearted move was made. Majid, with a force of about 5,000 men, marched out to his sea-side residence at Beit-el-Ras, eight miles from Zanzibar. There he remained while anarchy began to spread fast through the town and over the island. Country-houses were looted and burnt. Clove plantations were destroyed. All business in the town stopped. Shops were closed. Shots began to fly about the streets. One of the chief 'banyan' merchants, a British subject, was killed as he stood at his door. Another British Indian was seriously wounded. Refugees were crowding into boats and setting sail for the African mainland. Clearly something had to be done, and early on October 14, Rigby, accompanied by Commander Adams and Lieutenant Berkely of H.M.S. *Lynx*, which had arrived the previous evening, proceeded to Beit-el-Ras and insisted that instant action should be taken to restore order and protect the lives of British subjects. Majid yielded to the spur. Accompanied at his request by Lieutenant Berkely and some of the younger officers from the *Assaye* and the *Lynx*, he led his force inland to attack Barghash's stronghold. They found he had made good use of the respite given him. The big stone house and its sur-

<sup>1</sup> Russell, 112-4. See also R. N. Lyne, *Zanzibar in Contemporary Times* (London, 1905), 53-6.

rounding buildings and outer wall were loopholed and barricaded. Within were some 500 men, mostly el-Harathi and 'Northern Arabs' whom Barghash, with 10,000 dollars rashly given him by Majid when he promised to leave Zanzibar, had tempted to join in his revolt. Against such a position neither Majid's Arabs and Swahili nor even his Baluchi mercenaries were willing to advance. A few of his Turkish artillerymen assisted the British officers to bring two guns to bear; but, even when the gates and doors had been blown open, no attempt was made to storm the house. When firing ceased at dusk, Majid had lost sixty men and achieved nothing. Next morning he formally applied to Rigby for aid, and on the 16th a naval party, one hundred strong with twelve officers and a 12-pound gun and Lieutenant Berkely in command, set out to take 'Marsailles'. When they reached the house, they found it empty.<sup>1</sup>

Rigby, meantime, had returned to Zanzibar which, save for a Baluchi company on guard at the fort and the palace, had been left quite unprotected: and there he learnt that Barghash had entered the town by stealth the previous night, had only been dissuaded from firing and looting it by the el-Harathi who had kinsfolk and property therein, and had finally taken refuge in his own house overlooking the harbour. Rigby at once put a cordon of guards about the house and sent a messenger to Majid asking for authority to arrest his brother. It arrived at midnight, and next morning, with a detachment of marines, he proceeded to the house and called on its inmates to submit to their legal ruler. No response was given, so rifle-fire was opened at the barricaded windows. Shouts of surrender were soon heard, and Rigby, walking up to the door, rapped on it with his walking-stick and demanded that Barghash should give himself up within a certain time-limit. A few minutes before it expired, Barghash came out in tears, and yielded his sword to Rigby. He was taken under a British guard to the palace.<sup>2</sup>

It only remained to decide what should be done with him.

<sup>1</sup> Rigby's account in Russell, 115-7, and in his letter to Rear-Admiral Sir F. Grey, 20. x. 59: (F.O. 54. 17). Description of the operations by an officer in the *Assaye: The Times*, 16. i. 60. Majid's account, which slurs over his own lethargy and the cowardice of his troops but otherwise tallies with Rigby's, is given in his Memorandum dated 14. x. 60. presented to the Disputes Commission: see *Report*, 121-2.

<sup>2</sup> Rigby's account, as in preceding footnote.



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Had Majid captured him unaided, he would probably have put him to death. As it was, he insisted that Rigby should settle his fate. So Rigby told him that Majid was willing to pardon him if he would leave Zanzibar for ever and be guided by British advice. Barghash assented; and next day (October 19), in full durbar, he signed a written promise couched in similar terms and swore on the Koran to keep it, 'adding in a loud voice, "I swear I will never again listen to the advice of the French, nor of the el-Harthi, nor of anyone except the British Government."' That night he was safely on board the *Assaye*, bound for exile in Bombay.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, for the second time, the dangers which threatened Majid's throne and person had been averted by the British consul's intervention, but on this occasion Rigby had obtained the help of British troops and led them into action. He was clearly justified. It was not, as he argued in his report to Bombay, a case of subjects 'endeavouring to rid themselves of an unpopular or tyrannical ruler'. It was a wanton rebellion, only backed by the el-Harthi and outsiders from the Persian Gulf. The town of Zanzibar was in danger of destruction, and 'there are nearly five thousand peaceable British subjects residing here who looked only to me for the protection of their lives and property.' At any moment, moreover, the French might have arrived on the scene. The *Cordelière* was reported to be coming up from the south. Had she reached Zanzibar before Barghash's arrest, a difficult international situation might easily have developed. As it was, the trouble was over, really over this time. 'I do not think there is the slightest fear of any disturbance occurring here in future.'<sup>2</sup>

Lord Elphinstone and his colleagues fully accepted Rigby's case and put their approval of his conduct formally on record. In Whitehall there was some discussion. Had not the British consul, it was asked, taken sides in a civil war? But Sir Charles Wood, who had just become the first Secretary of State for

<sup>1</sup> Russell, 118-9.

<sup>2</sup> Rigby to Government of Bombay, 21. x. 59, quoted by Russell, 120. See also Rigby's evidence before the Select Committee on the East African Slave Trade in 1871; *Report* (No. 420 of 1871), 43. 'No doubt the Sultan would have lost his life and the whole of his dominions would have been in a state of anarchy, had not he given me sole authority over the town.'

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India, firmly supported Rigby and was backed by Lord John Russell at the Foreign Office. The main justification, Russell noted, was that the disturbances 'had already led to the murder of one British subject and to the wounding of another and threatened the immediate destruction of British property and the prospective annihilation of British trade.'<sup>1</sup>

### 3

The field was now clear for the arbitration. Thwain had accepted it and promised to abide by its results at the time his fleet was intercepted. The same proposal had thereupon been put to Majid and similarly accepted. In March 1860 Brigadier W. M. Coghlan, Political Resident at Aden, was commissioned to inquire into and report on the dispute. He visited Muscat in June and Zanzibar in September. In December he submitted an admirably concise and lucid report.<sup>2</sup>

Thwain's case has already been stated. His first point—that Said had only intended a temporary division of his realm—was countered by the production of the letter which Said wrote to Lord Aberdeen at the Foreign Office in 1844. 'On our death', he had said, 'we constitute and appoint our son Seyyid Khalid to be the ruler of all our African possessions . . . and in like manner our son Seyyid Thwain to be ruler over all our possessions in Oman and its neighbourhood.' Said's object, wrote Hamerton in a covering dispatch, was 'to ascertain whether he might look to Her Majesty's Government to guarantee the succession to his sons Khalid and Thwain.' When Khalid died in 1854 and Majid was appointed Governor of Zanzibar in his place, Said made no official declaration that Majid had thereby become heir to the rulership of his African dominions; but at Said's death Hamerton stated that he was 'perfectly well aware' that that had been Said's intention. There could be little doubt, then, on this point, and Coghlan conceded it to Majid. But, as he went on to show, it was only a minor point since it was not a deceased ruler's wish that determined the succession to an

<sup>1</sup> Bombay Resolution, Russell, 113-4. F. O. Minute, 15. iii. 60; Wood to G. of B., undated draft; Russell to I.O., 22. iii. 60: F.O. 54. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Commission, 1. iii. 60: Report, 4. xii. 60. *Disputes Commission Report*, 3, 56-86. For Coghlan's previous action *re* the Kuria Muria Islands, see *East Africa and its Invaders*, 536, 540-2.

Arab throne. The whole history of Oman in particular proved the contrary. In no single instance had a ruler of Muscat disposed of his realm as he pleased. His successor had usually taken the throne by force, as Said himself had done; and more than once a usurper had diverted the succession from the dynasty which had previously enjoyed it. But seizure or usurpation was not enough. To be recognised in law or custom it required the acceptance or at least the acquiescence of the tribesmen. Majid himself, indeed, was obliged to admit that 'the sovereignty of Oman had hitherto depended on election, the principal tribes generally choosing the candidate who was either most beloved by them or who possessed the greatest power to enforce his pretensions.' One of his relatives put it more tersely: 'Might, coupled with election by the tribes, is the only right.'<sup>1</sup>

So far Thwain's second contention held good—that Said's choice of Majid as ruler of Zanzibar and indeed his partition of the realm had no force without the people's assent. But which people? The people of Oman, said Thwain. The people of Zanzibar and the African coast, said Majid. It was true, said Coghlan, that at the death of any previous ruler the tribesmen of Oman had been entitled to speak for the whole Omani realm: but, when Said was elected, the lordship of Oman over the African coast-towns had been only recently established and was still largely nominal. 'Moreover, their importance both in a political and a commercial point of view was then inconsiderable, the Arabs valuing them more as a nursery from whence they could readily procure an abundant supply of slaves than for any other cause.' Fifty years later, when Said died, the whole situation had changed. His authority had been established throughout his African dominions; and so rapid had been their economic development that they had become 'far more valuable in every way than the Arabian territories'. Their people, therefore, had acquired the right to be regarded no longer as inferiors or subjects of the Arabs of Oman but as their equals, equally entitled to a voice in the election of their ruler. They had

<sup>1</sup> Said to Aberdeen, 23. vii. 44, and Hamerton to A., 31. vii. 44: *Disputes Commission Report*, 29-30. Said's intention: *ibid.* 57-8. (For further details, see *East Africa and its Invaders*, 453-6.) Question of succession: *Disputes Commission Report*, 60-1. Coghlan was accompanied by the Rev. G. P. Badger, author of *The Imams and Seyyids of Oman* (London, 1871), who knew at least as much about the history of Oman as Majid.

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unquestionably chosen Majid at Said's death and had confirmed their choice by rallying to his support when they learned of Thwain's intention to attack him. But this election was not an election to the throne of Oman, which they did not dispute Thwain's right to occupy. It was an act of divorcement from Oman, and in that aspect Coghlan characterised it as 'a national revolution'—a revolution, he might have added, similar in principle to those by which the European colonists of North and South America had severed their connexion with their mother-countries. And as a revolution Thwain had been justified in attempting to suppress it in the last resort by force.<sup>1</sup>

Now came the crux of the argument. British intervention had precluded a decision of the issue by force; and it might be pleaded that a revolution ought only to be recognised if it asserted itself by superior power against the authority it had renounced. What would have happened if there had been no intervention? Coghlan accepted Rigby's account of the situation at that time; but he pointed out that Majid's position had apparently become less secure when, a few months later, Barghash and the el-Harthi rebelled, since it was only with British aid that the rebellion was suppressed. This second intervention had not, however, affected Thwain's claims; for neither Barghash nor the el-Harthi had risen on his behalf but on their own. If Thwain, moreover, had not been intercepted, if he had carried out his invasion of Zanzibar, civil war would certainly have broken out in Oman. Thwain's rival, Turki, would have risen in revolt and would probably have succeeded in mastering the whole country. In that event, as Elphinstone had put it, 'in grasping the shadow of sovereignty in Zanzibar, Seyyid Thwain would have lost the substance in Muscat.'<sup>2</sup>

It was easy to dispose of Thwain's third and last point—that by paying him a 'tribute' of 40,000 crowns Majid had recognised his sovereignty over Zanzibar. Clearly that had never been Majid's interpretation of it. Clearly he had regarded the payment not as 'tribute', but as a 'friendly gift' in continuance of the practice by which Said had regularly aided the

<sup>1</sup> *Disputes Commission Report*, 60-6.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 69-71. Coghlan cites Elphinstone's *Minute* (10. viii. 59) which was based on Colonel Russell's report on his visit to Muscat.

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revenues of Muscat from the greater income he obtained at Zanzibar.<sup>1</sup>

The foregoing arguments, Coghlan pointed out, stood on grounds of right, and on them alone he based his decision that 'Seyyid Majid's claims to the sovereignty of Zanzibar and its African dependencies are superior to any which can be adduced in favour of Seyyid Thwain'. But there was also, he went on, an 'argument on the score of expediency'. He quoted a report by Hamerton to show that the task of governing both parts of the Omani realm had proved too much even for a ruler of Said's exceptional gifts. 'His absence from Oman destroyed his influence with the tribes and nearly caused him the loss of all his Arabian possessions.'<sup>2</sup> Conversely the peace and prosperity of East Africa would inevitably suffer if it were treated as a dependency of Oman and ruled from Muscat. As to the possible future of Arab East Africa as a separate political entity, Coghlan accepted Rigby's views.

'I think [Rigby had written], if Zanzibar is governed with prudence, it may perform a very important part in the future commerce and civilisation of East Africa. From Port Natal to Cape Guardafui the only state from which any progress or stability can be hoped is Zanzibar. Its commerce has rapidly increased within the last five years, and it bids fair to become the chief emporium of trade on the east coast. Its population possesses valuable elements for commerce in the wealthy and numerous settlers from India, and the enterprising Arabs and Swahili who travel over Central Africa, distributing foreign goods in exchange for the products of the country. The Portuguese possessions on the east coast are in a hopeless state of decay, and there is not the slightest probability of the Portuguese ever advancing the civilisation or commerce of the interior. If Zanzibar should be an independent state, the dominions of its ruler would probably soon extend into the interior, and his power would be consolidated, and in time it might form a considerable African kingdom. But supposing that—from the non-residence of the ruling chief, from its being continually held as a dependency of Muscat, from neglect or feeble rule such as Oman has suffered from for so many years in consequence of the late Imam being a non-resident—the Zanzibar state were

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.* 59–60.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 72.

gradually to lose its power over the territories of the mainland, the petty chiefs and sultans would soon become independent; the treaties for the suppression of the Slave Trade would be disregarded; foreign settlements would be established; and all hope of progress be destroyed.<sup>1</sup>

Partition, therefore, seemed as expedient as it was just; but, since Zanzibar was so much richer than Muscat, since indeed it would be difficult for Thwain to maintain his government on the resources of Oman only, Coghlan recommended that the payment of the subsidy should be resumed and continued in perpetuity. It must not imply any kind of dependence of Zanzibar on Muscat, and Thwain must accept the arrangement as a final settlement of all his claims.<sup>2</sup>

Summing up, Coghlan stated 'the most equitable terms for settling the existing dispute between the rival parties' as follows:

'1st—That Seyyid Majid shall be confirmed in the independent sovereignty over Zanzibar and its African territories.

'2nd—That, as regards the succession to that sovereignty, neither the ruler of Muscat nor the tribes of Oman shall have any right whatever to interfere; that the sovereign of Zanzibar, or the sovereign in conjunction with the people, shall be left absolutely free to make whatever arrangements they may deem expedient for appointing future successors to Seyyid Majid.

'3rd—That, in consideration of these concessions, Seyyid Majid shall be bound to remit to Seyyid Thwain the stipulated yearly subsidy of 40,000 crowns; and further to liquidate all the arrears due on that account since the payment was suspended.

'4th—That this subsidy of 40,000 crowns per annum shall be a primary and permanent charge on the resources of the Zanzibar state, payable by the sovereign of that state to the ruling sovereign of Muscat and Oman.'<sup>3</sup>

Sir George Clerk, who had become Governor of Bombay on Elphinstone's death towards the end of 1859, and his Council warmly commended Coghlan's report and adopted its recommendations except on two minor points. They considered that it would be unfair to require Majid to pay more than two years' arrears of the subsidy and that the proposed arrangements for

<sup>1</sup> *Disputes Commission*, 72-3.

<sup>2</sup> *Disputes Commission*, 73.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 76.

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the succession to the throne lay outside the terms of the arbitration. The report thus amended was approved by the Government of India, and on April 2, 1861, Lord Canning addressed a joint communication to Thwain and Majid. After stating the terms of his decision, he continued:

'I am satisfied that these terms are just and honourable to *both* of you; and as you have deliberately and solemnly accepted my arbitration, I shall expect that you will cheerfully and faithfully abide by them, and that they will be carried out without unnecessary delay.'<sup>1</sup>

The decision was, of course, a compromise. It gave Majid his independent sovereignty. It gave Thwain the subsidy. And, though any compromise might be distasteful to what Coghlan called 'the natural impetuosity and obstinate puerility of the Arab character', both Majid and Thwain accepted it as they were practically bound to do. To the impartial historian in these days it must seem in its fairness and common sense to have fully justified the brusque intervention of the British Indian authorities in the dispute. A war had been prevented which, whatever its result, must have led to general conflict and confusion not only in East Africa but also in Oman. For the future, the rulers of Muscat had been given a chance of setting their own house in order and sharing in the wealth which Said had created oversea, while the rulers of Zanzibar had been given a chance of realising Said's dreams. It was East Africa, as has been seen, he cared about, not Oman; and, since the Canning Award recognised and consolidated the position he had established in East Africa, it justified once more his understanding of British policy and his trust in British friendship.<sup>2</sup>

### 4

The Canning Award went far to free Majid from two of the three dangers which had threatened him. It shielded his sovereignty against Arab attack from without or within by giving it the explicit sanction and implicit support of the British

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.* 125-38.

<sup>2</sup> Text of Award and letters of acceptance from Thwain (15. v. 61) and Majid (25. vi. 61) in *S.P. Ivi* (1865-6), 1396 ff.

Government. As long, therefore, as British power remained unchallenged in the East African field, it was scarcely less difficult for the dissident minority at Zanzibar than it was for the ruler of Muscat to renew the struggle. Arab opinion, indeed, seems to have recognised that the issue had been finally decided. Custom had been observed. The usual quarrel over the succession had run its course with the usual violence and bloodshed. And Majid had won.

It was safe, then, for Majid to deal gently with the el-Harthi, whose chiefs had again been arrested and were now again released, except one of the most important, Abdulla-bin-Salim, who died in prison at Lamu in accordance, so Rigby thought, with Majid's orders.<sup>1</sup> It was safe even to permit Barghash to return to Zanzibar, and indeed that act of clemency and conciliation had been recommended by Coghlan. Of his guilt there was no question: and besides his open revolt in alliance with the el-Harthi, he had privily taken counsel with the French. On the occasion of de Langle's 'demonstration', he had gone straight from a long discussion at the French consulate to a secret meeting of the el-Harthi sheikhs. During his rebellion, likewise, he had kept in touch with Cochet. Two of his letters to him were carelessly left behind when he evacuated 'Marseilles'. But their purport, if vehemently anti-British, was not positively pro-French. 'My brother Majid's wish', began one of them, 'is to give the country to the English. . . . We, however, will not give our country either to the English or to the French or to the Americans or to anyone else; but, if we sell it, we shall do so only at the cost of our blood and of war to the death.' From the Arab standpoint, Coghlan argued, Barghash had simply done what had always been done on a ruler's death. 'Open rebellion in such cases has been considered an honour rather than a crime.' It was thought, moreover, that a year and more at Bombay, where he had been provided by the Government with a house, a carriage and 1,000 rupees (£100) a month, would certainly have tempered, if not quite disarmed, the inborn prejudices of an Arab patriot who had never before seen anything but Arab lands. He himself had written 'in the most abject terms' to Majid, praying for permission to return and renewing his pledge of loyalty. And Majid for his part, though

<sup>1</sup> Diary, 18. viii. 61: Russell, 94.



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he could never be persuaded to receive him, acquiesced in his return. In 1861, accordingly, Barghash came home. He kept his word, living in seclusion and abstaining from intrigue.<sup>1</sup>

The third danger to Majid's sovereignty remained. For a time, indeed, it seemed as if the Arbitration had revived and sharpened French endeavours to contest the ascendancy their British rivals had established at Zanzibar; and as long as they persisted, the whole settlement and Majid's position in particular could not be quite secure. The first evidence of renewed French activity was of a rather mysterious kind. On September 4, 1860, a few weeks before Coghlan came to execute his commission of inquiry at Zanzibar, Sir Henry Keppell, commanding at the Cape, reported to the Admiralty that the French were fitting up 'a large barrack, capable of holding 1200 men, in the centre of the town of Zanzibar'. It was intended, they said, for use as a hospital. The Admiralty passed the news on to the Foreign Office, and Earl Cowley, the ambassador at Paris, was instructed to make inquiries. M. Thouvenel, the Foreign Minister, declared that he had never heard of such a building. The French, he added, were upon the best terms with the Imam who, he was informed, was constantly expressing his anxiety at British 'projects of aggrandisement'. 'That must be an invention of M. Thouvenel or of the French consul at Zanzibar,' Palmerston noted. 'If the French Government are upon the best terms with the Imam, how happened it that they took part with the rebel prince who tried to dethrone him?' A few days later M. Thouvenel supplied Lord Cowley with a full account of the matter. The Bishop of Réunion, it appeared, had desired to establish a missionary institution at Zanzibar and had obtained the sympathetic assent of the French Government. 'Une maison spacieuse' had accordingly been leased in which it was intended

<sup>1</sup> *Disputes Commission*, 80-1. The second letter to Cochet, which was communicated to the Commission in Majid's statement, ran as follows: 'What is your opinion if, in coming to the town to attack Majid, we meet with any English or other Christians on the road—shall we kill them or not? Give me your reply on this point.' *Ibid.* 122. Whether these letters were found by Majid's followers or by the British naval party is not stated; but one cannot question the authority at least of the one quoted in the text since Coghlan accepted it.—Barghash at Bombay and his return; Russell, 122-3.

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to house a hospital for seamen, schools and workshops. The further space available had been offered to the Ministry of Marine for storing provisions for French ships calling at Zanzibar.<sup>1</sup>

The Bishop, meantime, had not been idle. On September 21 the corvette *La Somme* arrived at Zanzibar with a party of Jesuit priests, nuns and workmen. That the French Government were interested was evident; de Langle himself was in command; and Rigby was naturally anxious.

'The building [he reported to the Foreign Office] more resembles a large fortified barrack than anything else. It could easily accommodate 1,200 men and probably as many as 2000. It is the most extensive range of buildings in the town, is surrounded with a very high stone wall, and contains three spacious courts with wells in each. . . . I have no doubt it is an enterprise of the French Government, being on a scale too vast to be supported by private charities.'

Since French trade with Zanzibar, Rigby added, was rapidly decreasing, it seemed improbable that a hospital for French seamen was really wanted. Local opinion was frankly distrustful. 'It has created great excitement amongst the Arabs and African population, being considered as the certain prelude to French aggression.'<sup>2</sup>

Certainly, as Russell pointed out to Cowley, there were alarming possibilities in the building. It commanded the town. Occupied by French soldiers, it would become a fortress and make the French masters of Zanzibar. A plain hint, therefore, should be given to the French Government.

'Very intimate relations of friendship and alliance have . . . subsisted for a long period of time between the British Government and the late Imam of Muscat, and various treaties have been concluded between Great Britain and Zanzibar. An active and important trade is, moreover, carried on between H.M.'s Indian subjects and the subjects of the Sultan of Zanzibar. H.M.'s Government could not, therefore, see with indifference any events which tended to destroy the independence of the Sultan and to transfer his territory to another Power.'

<sup>1</sup> Keppell to Adm., 4. ix. 60; Adm. to F.O., 8. x. 60; F.O. 84. 1124. Cowley to F.O. (with P.'s note), 31. x. 60, and (with *note verbale*), 5. xi. 60; F.O. 84. 1118.

<sup>2</sup> Rigby to Russell, 2. i. and 1. vii. 61; F.O. 54. 18.

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This dispatch was sent in June. It was not till October that Cowley obtained a definite response from M. Thouvenel. But in the interval the French Government had decided to come to terms, if possible, over Zanzibar. Their main interest in East Africa was in Madagascar and the Comoro Islands. Attempts had been made during the past twenty years to secure a footing on the mainland; but, apart from the need for slaves at Réunion, the economic possibilities of the coast seemed much less substantial on closer acquaintance than had at one time been supposed, and for strategic purposes it was clear that an attempt to obtain a harbour there would be obstinately resisted by the British and, if pressed, might even lead to war. The British for their part, satisfied perhaps with the hold they already possessed on the Indian Ocean, had so far betrayed no interest in the coast at all. Might it not be wise, therefore, to take this opportunity of seeking an agreement on the basis of mutual self-denial? M. Thouvenel, accordingly, protested that the ideas entertained at Zanzibar as to the object of the Catholic mission and its hospital were quite unfounded, and for a simple reason:

‘Le Gouvernement de l’Empereur n’attache pas moins de prix que celui de Sa Majesté Britannique au maintien de l’indépendance du Sultan de Zanzibar, et il est tout prêt à se lier, à cet égard, par tel engagement que le Gouvernement Britannique serait disposé à proposer et à prendre lui-même de son côté, en vue de la garantir plus formellement.’<sup>1</sup>

Since the British Government’s only territorial interest in East Africa was negative—to keep the French out—this offer was accepted with a promptitude that may possibly have surprised M. Thouvenel. By the end of the year a draft declaration was ready. In its first form, owing to a ‘clerical error’, it referred to the Sultan of Muscat as if Said was still alive and no partition of his realm had occurred; and, though the agreement had been intended to apply only to East Africa, it was decided, as the question had been accidentally raised, to extend it to Oman. On March 10 the Declaration was signed in Paris.

‘Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and His Majesty the Emperor of the French, taking into consideration the importance of maintain-

<sup>1</sup> Russell to Cowley, 27. vi. 61; Cowley to Russell, with *note verbale*, 5. x. 61. F.O. 84. 1143.

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ing the independence of His Highness the Sultan of Muscat and of His Highness the Sultan of Zanzibar, have thought it right to engage reciprocally to respect the independence of these Sovereigns.

'The Undersigned, Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at the Court of France, and the Minister Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of His Majesty the Emperor of the French, being furnished with the necessary powers, hereby declare, in consequence, that their said Majesties take reciprocally that engagement.'<sup>1</sup>

For a few more years East Africa was still to be a field of controversy between the French and British Governments, but only in the matter of the Slave Trade. The Declaration had made it impossible to quarrel over territory, impossible for either party in existing circumstances to attempt the annexation of Zanzibar or the coastland. Thus Majid's throne and realm were now really safe. Majid himself, however, seems never to have felt secure at Zanzibar. In 1866, indeed, he attempted, in a curiously impulsive manner, to make himself another home. The site he chose was on the mainland about forty-five miles south of Zanzibar, an attractive spot with a fine harbour and a good water-supply. Building materials were shipped there at heavy cost and work begun, under Majid's personal supervision, on the erection of a palace, a fort, and quarters for resident officials. A powerful steam-tug was ordered from Hamburg to assist ships through the narrow inlet into the harbour. To attract a settled population gifts of land were offered to anyone who would undertake to cultivate it. New caravan-routes

<sup>1</sup> The text of the Declaration was founded on that of the Anglo-French Declaration of November 28, 1843, respecting the independence of the Sandwich Islands. (Hertslet's *Treaties*, ix. 255.) On seeing the first draft, M. Thouvenel pointed out that there were two sovereigns. Cowley had 'some vague notion that they are one and the same person'. Russell to Cowley (with draft), 23. xii. 61: F.O. 84. 1143; C. to R., 10. i. 62: F.O. 84. 1178. Palmerston minuted *re* the second draft: 'Is it enough to acknowledge and agree to respect the independence of these rulers? Should there not be some engagement not to make any acquisition of territory from either of them?' But no addition to the text was made, though M. Thouvenel was told that the British Government was willing to insert after 'independence of these sovereigns' the words 'and their rights in their respective territories'. R. to C., 24. i. 62; C. to R., 10. iii. 62: F.O. 84. 1178. The Declaration is printed in *S.P.* lvii (1866-7), 785.

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radiating inland and a road along the coast northwards to Lamu and southwards to Kilwa were projected with a view to making the colony a great trading-centre. Altogether it was an ambitious scheme of colonisation, and the more interesting because it was an Arab scheme. But, apart from the cost, there was one insuperable difficulty. The supply of labour needed could not be maintained. In Zanzibar the slaves were imprisoned by the sea. On the northern section of the coast, at Mombasa for instance or Lamu, the inland tribes were, as G. E. Seward, acting consul at Zanzibar at the time, pointed out, 'more dangerous to the fugitive slave' than his Arab master. But the country round about the projected colony was safer for runaways, and beyond it lay the area in which most of the slaves had been born and bred. In the ten days Majid spent on the spot, forty of them disappeared. But Majid made light of this and other difficulties. He brushed aside the opposition of the 'banyans' who disliked the idea of diverting trade from the ports at which their business had been long established. He would not listen to reflections on the climate of the place: he had some Arabs flogged who gave it a 'bad character' for rain and fever. And the object of this unusual energy and eagerness on Majid's part was neither power nor wealth: no new settlement was needed to strengthen his rule on the coast or to increase its trade. The purpose of it all was revealed in the name he gave the place, Dar-es-Salaam, 'the harbour of peace': 'that is,' wrote John Kirk whose long career at Zanzibar had just begun, 'a place to retire to when consuls trouble him or when he is kicked out of the island: for they [the Arabs] have an idea that soon they will be out. Why they should think so,' he added, 'I know not; for no Power is desirous to possess it [Zanzibar] as things are.' As things were, Kirk was right. It was not in Majid's day that East Africa was threatened once more by European imperialism; and his successor, as it happened, was to keep Zanzibar and lose Dar-es-Salaam.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Seward to Govt. of Bombay, 10. xi. 66: F.O. 84. 1261. Kirk to Miss Cook, 18. x. 66: in private ownership.

### III

## VICE-CONSUL KIRK

(1866-1873)

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#### I

John Kirk, the son of a Scottish minister, was born on the Forfarshire coast in 1832. He studied medicine and botany at Edinburgh University, and in 1854 obtained his M.D. and L.R.C.S. and was appointed a resident physician at the Royal Infirmary. But his medical career was interrupted at the outset by a call for volunteers to make good the shocking deficiencies of the hospital service in the Crimea. On his return from the war in 1857 he contemplated devoting his life to botany rather than medicine, and he was about to apply for a professorship of Natural History in Canada when Sir William Hooker, the Director of Kew, who had detected his unusual ability, recommended him to Livingstone for a post on the staff of the Zambesi Expedition. From 1858 to 1863, accordingly, he served as botanist and medical officer on the Zambesi. From the little company of five or six white men who underwent the long physical and moral strain of those difficult, often dangerous, and at times disheartening wanderings, Kirk stood out head and shoulders above all except his leader: his courage and patience, his straightforwardness and common sense were comparable with Livingstone's own. Livingstone was by nature a solitary man and often ill at ease in the company of his own kind; but, if there were inevitable moments of friction and unhappiness when he wished he had been alone with his black men on the Zambesi as he had been on the march across the continent, those were the very moments when he owed most to the quiet, self-possessed, understanding fellow Scot.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For an account of Kirk's early life and a full description of the Zambesi Expedition based on Kirk's diary, see the author's *Kirk on the Zambesi* (Oxford, 1928).

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Back in England, Kirk was again perplexed about his future, and the problem was made more urgent by his engagement in 1865 to Miss Helen Cook, daughter of a Worcestershire doctor. Botany was still the stronger magnet; and the great collection of East African seeds and plants, drawings and notes, which he presented to Kew, and the papers he contributed to learned journals had already foreshadowed the high place he was to win in the scientific world. But he was to become a famous botanist as a by-product, so to speak, of a very different career. For botany as a profession was not good enough to marry on. He was offered the charge of the Botanic Gardens at Bombay and a similar position at Mauritius—not unattractive posts, especially the latter, but the salaries were insufficient and the prospects quite uncertain. So he was falling back rather reluctantly on medicine as the safe and sensible choice—he had indeed decided to buy a practice in a west-country town in England—when the current of his life was again suddenly diverted, and again, as it happened, to East Africa.<sup>1</sup>

In the autumn of 1865 the Government of Bombay were considering the appointment of a successor to Colonel Playfair of the Indian Army who had followed Rigby as consul at Zanzibar in 1863 and was now contemplating resignation on the grounds of ill-health. Just at this time, as it happened, Livingstone was passing through Bombay on his way back to East Africa; and when he heard of the vacancy at Zanzibar, he at once thought of Kirk as the man to fill it. 'I wish Kirk could get that post,' he wrote to his old friend, Oswell: 'he would be invaluable there.' But that was aiming too high. The consul at Zanzibar was formally appointed by the Foreign Office, but he also acted as Political Agent for the Government of Bombay, and on that account the choice of the man to fill the double post was virtually left in the latter body's hands. Naturally they preferred a tried man of their own service to a young newcomer from out-

<sup>1</sup> Kirk's plans in 1864-5: K. to Balfour, 13. xii. 64 (Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh), K. to J. Hooker, 16. i. 66 (Kew, *English Letters, 1866-1900*, 353). Kirk also presented some living animals from the Zambesi area to the Zoo and a collection of specimens, including over 350 birdskins, to the Natural History Museum. His most important report on the products of the area was published in *P.R.G.S.*, Series I, vi. For an estimate of his botanical work, see Sir D. Brain's obituary notice in *Proceedings of the Royal Society*, 1923, xv, and W. L. Hooker's memoir in *Kew Bulletin*, 1922, no. 2.

side; and in due course Dr. G. E. Seward, who had been attached to the consulate as Agency Surgeon, was appointed to act in Playfair's place. Who, then, was to be Agency Surgeon? That minor post likewise would probably have been filled from British India if Livingstone, who was staying at Government House, had not told Sir Bartle Frere that he would very much like to have his old lieutenant at Zanzibar. 'That', said Frere, 'decided it', and the offer was straightway made. 'You will hear', wrote Livingstone to another old friend, 'that I have a prospect of Kirk being out here. I am very glad of it, as I am sure his services will be found invaluable on the east coast.'<sup>1</sup>

Kirk, of course, was tempted by the offer. Despite the rebuffs and hardships of the Zambesi Expedition he had felt, like many other European travellers, the fascination of Tropical Africa. For a scientist, especially, it had the irresistible attraction of the unexplored; and anyone of ordinary human feeling who had been in personal contact with the Slave Trade was bound to welcome an opportunity of doing anything that could be done to combat it. Last but not least, the post would make marriage possible; for it would provide an adequate, if by no means substantial, income with a reasonable prospect of future increment. Zanzibar, on the other hand, was a strange place for starting on family life; and for that reason only, as Kirk's correspondence shows, he hesitated to accept the offer. Was it fair to ask a young woman who had never been out of England to accompany him into exile so far from home, to be one of so tiny a group of white folk among so many Arabs and Africans, to face the risks of so treacherous a climate? After a long discussion with his *fiancée*, he decided at least to give Zanzibar a trial. 'The appointment is nominally medical [he told his old teacher and confidant, Professor Balfour] but in fact is assistant to the political agent. . . . There is private practice to add a little to the salary, and possibly, if all goes well, in time there may be some promotion. So I decided to accept. . . . If I had money to live here, I'd not go out, but this is not the place for a poor man. In Zanzibar we have European fashions and an English bishop, no less: so it is not so very barbarous.'

<sup>1</sup> L. to Oswell, 29. ix. 65 and 1. i. 66: W. E. Oswell, *William Cotton Oswell* (London, 1900). ii. 91-3. L. to J. Young, 26. i. 66: W. G. Blaikie, *Personal Life of David Livingstone* (London, 1925), 308-9.



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Thus the determining choice of Kirk's life was made. He would go to Zanzibar, and, as soon as he had found a home for her, Miss Cook would follow and marry him. As if to confirm his decision, the scope of his work was extended before he left. As Agency Surgeon he was in any case to act as assistant to the Political Agent: now he was also appointed vice-consul—an agreeable addition to his status and his salary.<sup>1</sup>

He left England on April 24, 1866, and travelling by Paris to Marseilles, took ship to Alexandria. Three or four years later he might have been one of the first to pass through the Suez Canal. As it was, he spent seven unpleasant hours in the train to Cairo, followed by a 'dreary hot journey' by road to Suez; and so down the Red Sea, 'a perfect vapour bath', to Aden and the Seychelles. There he was picked up by H.M.S. *Highflyer*, employed on the East African patrol. Early in June he landed at Zanzibar.<sup>2</sup>

In the letters he wrote to his *fiancée* on the voyage and for the first few months after his arrival there is an occasional note of anxiety—not on his own account, but on hers. The risk of tropical disease, born of the heat and dirt, is often in his mind. But he consoles himself with the thought that they will not be tied to Zanzibar. 'We shall see, and stay or go, just as we find best.' And, after all, he reflects, on hearing of an outbreak of cholera in England, risks must be run wherever one may be. 'We have our life to live on this earth, and a work to do, and it is not for us to fret and vex because sometimes danger faces us.' It was a real danger. All Kirk's four predecessors at the consulate suffered from serious illness. But his courage was justified. Miss Cook came out and married him on March 14, 1867, and for twenty years they were to spend a happy and on the whole a healthy life at Zanzibar. Six children were born to them, five daughters and a son: and four of them are living now.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> K. to J. Hooker, 21. i. 66: Kew, *English Letters, 1866-1900*, 354. K. to Balfour, 5. iii. 66: Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh.

<sup>2</sup> Letters to Miss Cook, giving full details of the voyage, are in the possession of Kirk's family.

<sup>3</sup> Marion (known in the family as Mkubwa, 'the big one'), now Mrs. Bevington: Helen (Ndogo, 'the little one'), now Mrs. H. B. H. Wright: Nora, now Mrs. R. R. Marett: and Lt.-Col. John William Carnegie Kirk.

The population of the little island on which Kirk had made his home may be roughly estimated at that time at about 300,000 people. Of those only some 4,000 were Arabs. Descendants for the most part of 'colonists' who had migrated from Oman, they constituted the landed aristocracy of the island. Most of them by this time had acquired a tincture of African blood, so that the next class in the social scale, the Afro-Arab half-castes or Swahili, were not easily to be distinguished from them. To Rigby, as to Hamerton before him, they were unattractive folk. The soft climate of Zanzibar, the sedentary life, and the possession of so many more slaves and concubines than their kinsmen of the desert had ever owned seemed to have demoralised them. They had lost 'the rough virtues usually attributed to Arabs—manliness of character, energy, and personal courage'. They had become increasingly addicted to strong drink; and owing partly to their lack of energy and partly to their inveterate dishonesty nearly all the local trade had been appropriated by the Indians. 'Were the prosperity of the Zanzibar dominions dependent on these degenerate Arabs, it might well be despaired of.'<sup>1</sup>

Rigby thought better of the Arabs from the Hadramaut, a number of whom came regularly to Zanzibar to seek a living as porters and carriers. 'They are a patient industrious people,' he wrote; 'nearly all the work in the harbour—of shipping and landing cargo—is performed by them.' There was another kind of Arab immigration, by no means so desirable, from the shores of Oman and the Persian Gulf. Rigby excelled himself in vituperation of those 'Northern Arabs', as they were called: 'troublesome, turbulent, plundering, filthy, squalid, ill-featured savages and arrant cowards.'

'No sooner does the north-east monsoon commence to blow—about the middle of November—than thousands of these wretches hurry across in their boats from the Arabian coast, bringing for sale salted shark in a half-putrid state. . . . When the south-west monsoon sets in—about April—these Arabs hasten to return north; and before leaving the African coast,

<sup>1</sup> Rigby's *Report on the Zanzibar Dominions* (1860): Russell, 332. For Hamerton's opinion, see *East Africa and its Invaders*, 547.

kidnap men, women and children, and convey them to the Persian Gulf for sale. If they meet a ship-of-war, they do not hesitate to throw their wretched victims overboard in order to save their boats from capture.<sup>1</sup>

This seasonal visitation has continued to this day: but in Rigby's time and for part of Kirk's these invaders were more than a nuisance, they were a danger. Cowardly or not, they were murderous folk and they openly defied the Sultan's government. Majid, indeed, in 1861 was paying them a sort of ransom to the tune of 15,000 to 20,000 dollars a year. At periods of racial excitement, moreover, they were a danger to the Europeans in the island. Reporting on the Slave Trade patrol in 1861, Commander Oldfield wrote:

'On the 8th March last a number of Beni-bu-Ali Arabs assembled around the American consulate; they severely wounded four servants of the consulate, and locked the consul in his house and blockaded it all day. Other Northern Arabs at the same time went through the town brandishing drawn swords and calling out that they wanted the blood of a white man; and it was only after paying a sum of 500 dollars to the Sheikh of the party that the blockade of the consulate was withdrawn.'<sup>2</sup>

More than once, Oldfield added, the British consul had had to obtain a guard of the Sultan's Baluchi soldiers 'to insure his life and property from the attack or insult of these Northern pirates'. Some years later, another officer on the East African patrol, Captain Bedingfeld, again drew attention to the risk the Europeans underwent at the time of this annual invasion.

'As soon as these scoundrels arrive, the people confine themselves to their houses after sunset, and you may see "Juros" swaggering about the streets in parties of eight or ten, fully armed; and neither the Sultan nor his officers dare molest them. They have complete command of the place, and were it not for the fear of the man-of-war making reprisals upon their dhows, I believe the lives of the British subjects here would never be safe.'<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Russell, 328-9.

<sup>2</sup> Com. Oldfield's report enclosed in Rear-Adm. Walker to Admiralty, 20. xi. 61: *S.P.* liii (1862-3), 1219-20.

<sup>3</sup> Bedingfeld to Commodore Hillyar, 1. xii. 66, in I.O. to F.O., 15. viii. 67: F.O. 84. 1284.

As important as the Arabs were the Indians resident in Zanzibar and on the coast—perhaps more important, since almost the whole of the commercial and financial business on which the prosperity of Arab East Africa depended was in their hands. Traders from north-west India were crossing the sea to the African coast long before recorded history began. They were living and working there at least as early as the Arabs; and their numbers and activities had steadily increased. When Said moved his capital to Zanzibar in 1840, he encouraged them to come there for economic reasons. When Kirk arrived, there were five or six thousand of them in Zanzibar, in the coast-towns, and at the trade-posts in the interior. Of these about 3,660 came from British India or from Indian States in Kathiawar and Cutch under British protection, and were therefore either British subjects or British ‘protected persons’. The word ‘banyan’ or trader was often used of the Indians without discrimination; but strictly, of course, the ‘banyans’ are a Hindu caste, and in 1870 there were only 474 Hindus in Arab East Africa. The great majority of the Indian immigrants were Moslems—2,558 of the Khoja and 588 of the Bohora community. Unlike the Hindus who came without wives and children to make money and return some day to their motherland, the Moslems were true colonists, bringing their families with them and making East Africa their home. ‘They are a very thrifty industrious people,’ Rigby reported in 1860. ‘A new quarter of the town, entirely inhabited by these Indian Moham-medans, has recently sprung up and is rapidly increasing.’<sup>1</sup>

The Asiatic population, Arab and Indian, was far outnumbered by the African. Of the original natives of Zanzibar, the Hadimu and Tumbatu who lived a secluded life in their villages, paying a head-tax to the Sultan but governed in their domestic affairs by their own ‘chief’, the Mwenyi Mkuu, there were only a few thousand. But the slaves, brought from the mainland and purchased in the great slave market in the town, numbered about two-thirds of the total population, say 200,000. Most of the manual work was done by them for their Arab, Swahili or Indian masters. They tended their plantations. They served as porters in their caravans. They stocked

<sup>1</sup> *Report*; Russell, 329. For Said and the ‘banyans’, see *East Africa and its Invaders*, 300–3.

their harems. On the country estates, at any rate, their discipline seems to have been slack; and some of them were permitted to bear arms. At a time of disturbance, therefore—in 1859, for instance, as has been observed—they might be troublesome, though they seem never to have been, like the 'Northern Arabs', really dangerous.<sup>1</sup>

Lastly, the Europeans. In 1830 there had been none in Zanzibar. In 1870 there were 66—men, women and children. Of these 22 were British. The only British officials were the consul and Kirk. The only British business-firm was Fraser & Co., recently established by R. C. Fraser, an ex-captain in the Indian Navy. The rest of the British community consisted of the staff of the 'United Universities' Mission to Central Africa which, after its tragic beginning in the Shiré Highlands, had planted itself in 1864 at Zanzibar as a preparatory base for the invasion of the mainland. Bishop Tozer was in charge, assisted by Dr. Edward Steere and five or six other missionaries, men and women. It was the French mission, similarly, established in its now innocuous stronghold, that raised the number of French residents to 25. Otherwise there was only the consulate and two commercial houses. There were seven Americans, Consul Webb and the members of three firms, and twelve Germans, Consul Witt and the members of four firms. Both Webb and Witt were themselves in business.<sup>2</sup>

In the light of later events it is interesting to observe the amicable relations which existed in those early days between the German group and the British. Rigby's friendship with Consul O'Swald has been mentioned. On one occasion he dined, the solitary Englishman in the place at that time, with a party of ten Germans. Four Germans shared his Christmas dinner in 1860. Kirk, likewise, was on the best of terms with Consul Witt, whose acquaintance he had made on the voyage from Suez.<sup>3</sup>

It was a German, as it happened, who was responsible for the first exciting episode of Kirk's life at Zanzibar. One of the

<sup>1</sup> As there was no census, the non-European population-figures can only be very roughly estimated: see *East Africa and its Invaders*, 319–20.

<sup>2</sup> Kirk's Administration Report on the Zanzibar Agency, 1870; *P.P.* 1872. liv. 781–90. For the establishment of the American and German firms, see *East Africa and its Invaders*, chap. xii.

<sup>3</sup> K.'s letters to Miss Cook.

German business-men in the town, Heinrich Reute,<sup>1</sup> a member of the consulate staff, lived next door to the house occupied by Seyyida Salme, one of Majid's favourite sisters. Despite the strictness of Moslem custom in such matters, they became intimately acquainted; and in August 1866 it was apparent that she was about to have a child. It was a tragic situation since Salme's family were bound to exact a terrible retribution for a crime so shocking in their eyes as a *liaison* with a Christian. Well aware of this herself, she planned to escape with her lover to Germany, sold her estates and disposed of her slaves, and sent her personal belongings secretly on board a ship belonging to Reute's firm. But at the last moment Majid was informed of the intrigue by one of Salme's slaves, and forbade her to go. She was well known and liked, it seems, in the British community; and Captain Pasley of H.M.S. *Highflyer*, who was often calling at Zanzibar on patrol-work, determined to save her from what he believed was certain death. Taking advantage of a religious festival on August 26, when all good Moslems were required to go down to the sea and wash, he dispatched a cutter to that part of the beach where Salme had arranged to perform the ceremony, carried her off to the *Highflyer*, and at once, without the usual warning to the consul or the Arab authorities, weighed anchor and set off to Aden.<sup>2</sup>

'The *Highflyer*'s departure [wrote Kirk to his *fiancée*] has given us something to talk about. Pasley has taken off poor "Bibi" Salme in his ship. She'd have been killed, I think, sooner or later, had she remained. . . . I am told she got into the cutter, taking down all her boxes of dollars safely and springing into the boat, although it was manned by infidels. Her two servants, who knew nothing of the whole affair, screamed, howled, and roared, as women will; but a bluejacket covered the mouth of one with his hand and lifted her in, *nolens volens*, to follow her mistress. The other unluckily got clean away, bellowing up the street. . . . Some blame the English consulate—as if the ships of war were under us: and I'm sure no man is more innocent than poor Dr. Seward.'<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The name was changed to Ruete by his widow some twenty years after these events.

<sup>2</sup> K.P. *misc.*

<sup>3</sup> K. to Miss Cook.

## VICE-CONSUL KIRK

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Kirk naturally made light of the alarm which the incident created in the little European community. 'Weren't they in a funk!' But in fact they were in real danger. Majid and all his family must have been stirred to an intensity of wounded pride and bitter resentment which it is difficult, perhaps, for anyone but a fellow Moslem to measure. Pasley's interference in what was to Moslems so pre-eminently a private and personal affair must have seemed even more outrageous than Reute's effrontery. But Majid appears to have realised that in truth the two British officials had had no knowledge of the plot and that, since Europeans and not merely men of his own race and faith were involved, the wisest and most dignified course was to swallow the insult and keep silence. Salme's name, of course, would never be mentioned again. She had dropped out of her family's life as if she were dead. But such self-restraint was not to be expected of the Arabs in general, who would find it difficult to differentiate between the British Consulate and the British Navy, and particularly of the 'Northern Arabs' whose annual visitation was now imminent. Indeed, on the day after the *Highflyer's* sudden departure, Seward wrote to the Government of Bombay, suggesting that 'some efficient vessel of the East African squadron should be permanently stationed at Zanzibar during the winter months.' In November he made the same appeal to the naval authorities. The yearly invasion of Zanzibar, he pointed out, by 'some thousands of armed pirates' was always dangerous. 'The coming season promises to be one of more than ordinary hazard in this respect, for the "Northern Arabs" have something to avenge. Recent acts of the *Highflyer* can have by no means added to their forbearance or lessened their enmity towards us, and retaliation upon the virtually defenceless English and British Indian population would be both easy and inviting.'

'I fully concur', wrote Captain Bedingfeld in forwarding this appeal to Commodore Hillyar, 'that there is grave cause for apprehension when those northern fanatics hear of the escape of the Sultan's sister in an English man-of-war.' A ship was accordingly dispatched to Zanzibar, and the sight of it in the harbour may well have averted bloodshed.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Seward to G. of B., 27. viii. 66; S. to Bedingfeld, 27. xi. 66; B. to Hillyar, 1. xii. 66; H. to G. of B., 6. ii. 67; enclosed in I.O. to F.O. 15. viii. 67; F.O. 84. 1284.

Reute, meanwhile, had been slow to realise the risk he ran himself at Zanzibar. Several months passed before he followed Salme to Aden where, on March 30, 1867, she was baptized and married. A few weeks later, Emily Reute, as she was now called, left with her husband for Hamburg; and there, one might suppose, they might have been content to stay in peace. But they presently conceived the strange idea of returning to Zanzibar. In the spring of 1868 a member of Reute's firm wrote to Churchill asking his opinion as to the risk Reute would run if he went back. Churchill's reply was unequivocal. Reute's life, he said, would certainly be in danger since his own offence had now been aggravated by the greater offence, in Arab eyes, of his wife's apostasy. 'For the interests of your house and your trade', he added, 'Mr. Reute had better keep away from Zanzibar.' If Churchill was astonished at the project of return, Majid's indignation, when he heard of it, may be imagined. Painful as it must have been to him, he formally protested to the Hanseatic consul; and Churchill, dreading the consequences if the protest were ignored, invoked the aid of the Foreign Office in support of it. Majid, he wrote, had seemed willing 'to drop a curtain over the whole transaction'; and Reute had mistaken his silence for acquiescence in what had happened. If he did come back, 'he would place his own life in danger and very likely jeopardise that of the other European inhabitants of this out-of-the-way corner of the earth.' Fortunately this intervention achieved its purpose. A few months later a high official of the North German Confederation, to which Hamburg and her Hanseatic sisters had adhered in 1867, informed the British ambassador in Berlin that Herr Reute had 'abandoned all idea of returning to Zanzibar'. In 1870 Reute died as the result of an accident, leaving Emily Reute with a son and two daughters in Hamburg. She will be heard of again later on.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Churchill to Carl Schriever, 26. vi. 68: Zanzibar Archives, *Outward Dispatches*, 1867-8. C. to Stanley, 9. vii. 68; S. to C., 13. xi. 68: F.O. 84. 1292.—The North German Confederation was constituted on July 1, 1867. The official concerned was the President of the N.G. Federal Chancery.—Emily Ruete wrote an account of her early life which was published in Berlin in 1886: an English translation, entitled *Memoirs of an Arabian Princess*, was published in London and New York in 1888. A French edition appeared in 1905. See also Sir Claud Hollis's sketch, *Seyyida Salme* (Zanzibar, 1927).



3

Except for the Mission settlement at Mbweni on the coast a few miles out of the town, where Kirk later had a little 'country-house' and a garden of rare plants and trees, all the Europeans lived in Zanzibar. The town, which then contained about 80,000 people, stood on a three-sided spit of land between the sea and a shallow creek. With its narrow winding streets, often less than seven yards broad, its crowded 'bazaars', its flat-roofed white-washed houses and inner courtyards, it was a typical oriental town of the second class. The only substantial buildings were the Sultan's palace and harem, some of the wealthier Arabs' town-houses; and the European consulates and residences—most of which were on or near the sandy harbour-shore. There were a few attractive pieces of Saracenic domestic architecture and some fine carved brass-studded doors; but the mosques were of the low, oblong, undecorated type, and there were no ancient walls, no domes or tapering minarets, to compensate the romantic European for the uncongenial features of an eastern town. There was no drainage system or sanitary regulations, most of the drinking water was grossly impure. Noisome black puddles and offensive odours waylaid the passer-by. The house in which Livingstone lodged during part of his stay at Zanzibar in 1866 stood near the creek, the beach of which, like that of the harbour, was 'the general depository of the filth of the town'. 'The stench at night', he wrote, 'is so gross or crass one might cut out a slice and manure a garden with it. . . . No one can truly enjoy good health here.'<sup>1</sup>

In such a plague-spot the new doctor might expect to find plenty of work; and despite two European rivals, employed at the French consulate and by Fraser & Co. respectively, Kirk soon obtained a steady 'general practice'. Arabs seldom consulted him, knowing nothing, as Rigby had said, of European medicine and 'always trusting to fate and charms'. But the missionaries needed him—in the course of a few months he had

<sup>1</sup> *Last Journals* (London, 1874), i. 8. 'Livingstone's House' is still preserved, but to-day a broad road runs past it and across the now innocuous creek. It is called 'Hollis Road' and is the Zanzibari's favourite evening promenade. For the revolting details of the filthy condition of Zanzibar, see J. Christie, *Cholera Epidemics in East Africa* (London, 1876), chap. ix.

to advise Bishop Tozer to seek better health in England—and the German officials and business men made use of his services. The bulk of his patients, however, were Indians.

‘There are few days [he told his *fiancée*] on which I do not pick up a guinea among the Hindus: the Mussulmen go elsewhere as yet. . . . They are charming patients as they bring neither wife nor child from India. . . . It is like a club-practice in London among bachelors.’<sup>1</sup>

It was a pleasant exception to this ordinary round of work to receive a summons from so notable a person as Barghash (August 1866). Kirk’s detailed account of the sequel may be given in full, not only for its importance as the meeting of the two men by whom the future history of Zanzibar was largely to be made, but also because it gives a vivid glimpse of the interior of the island, the freshness and beauty of which made life in the town more tolerable for Kirk as for Rigby before him.

‘Yesterday Seyyid Barghash, the brother of Sultan Majid, sent his head man to tell me that his sister was very ill at his country house five miles out of town. He had before asked me to see her, but then she wished to be allowed to try the native doctors, and much against my wish they did have them. I told them that to try natives and then to expect me to take on the case afterwards was absurd, but native prejudices among the women are very strong and so, after suffering at their hands the application of a hot iron very freely, they wished me to see her. From their account I expected to find some large abscess and went prepared to do all I could: for Barghash is a good jolly fellow, I would willingly do what I can for his sake. To-day at 6 a.m. I started on horseback, passed through the native streets while yet few people were moving about, crossed the bridge which leads over the creek, and gained the open country. The first mile was over a sandy path with huts and houses scattered along. Before the huts there were groups of natives selling dried cassava-root, sweet potatoes, oranges, and other native food. Then the road began to ascend into a fine country over a red, sandy, but rich soil. Large mango trees lined it at intervals and between was scattered brushwood and low grass. The dew still hung on the leaves and the horizontal rays of the sun made the scene very beautiful. I was well mounted on one of Mr. Witt’s

<sup>1</sup> K. to Miss C.

horses. Before the horse ran the head servant of the prince in a white loose gown with a fine dagger in his girdle: he cleared the path of all comers, pushing them aside in a most uncereemonious manner, so that I might ride at a trot without anyone standing in the way. Another boy, a native of the country near the Nyasa lake, also ran before, carrying a halter to secure my horse when at the country house. After two miles we were among the clove plantations. This is a fine glossy-leaved evergreen, about 20 feet high, neatly planted in rows. It was a beautiful sight, the groves of clove trees with tall coco-nut palms and mangoes interspersed. In the hollows, where a small stream of water was still running, a little sugar-cane, cassava-root, etc., were planted: the former is cut and carried to the bazaar where it is purchased for a few coppers and chewed by the blacks.

'The house of Barghash's sister is on a hill, perhaps 200 feet high, in the midst of extensive clove gardens. It is a good stone house with a large well-made court in which the cloves are dried when picked. They are now busy collecting the crop which promises to be a very good one this season. Outside the gate I was met on dismounting by Barghash himself who had gone before in the grey of the morning to be on the spot to welcome me. He had travelled thither on a donkey. . . . From the upper windows (and no one lives on the ground floor) of the house we had a glorious prospect, looking over the plantations and groves of clove and coco-nut right down to the sea. . . . We could look down to the town of Zanzibar, beautiful in the distance, with many vessels at anchor in its harbour. Here and there are islets studded with trees and palms. Landwards the view reaches over an undulating country of red soft soil, cut up by valleys, but without any high point to fill the eye. . . . A charmingly cool air passed in at the open windows. . . . The patient I can tell you little of. She is 50 years old and, unlike ladies of that mature age, unwilling to disclose her face. I examined the painful part without seeing her countenance which I presume was not lovely. Her hands were delicately formed and showed that she had never done much to require them. Unfortunately the disease proved to be of a very serious nature and of five years' standing. When small and limited, they had not called in anyone. . . . It would be dangerous to pro-

mise a complete recovery and in the meantime we must heal the sores caused by native practice and then decide on a further course.

'The Prince, you must know, is a great cook. He in person superintends the cuisine and I had an ample and elaborate breakfast spread in the upper room. A huge dish contained a pile of rice coloured with saffron and under it there lay imbedded several fowls and joints of meat. This I found rather good after a long ride. Next came a stew of mutton with raisins for part of its condiment: then a large dish of vermicelli done up in something sweet and oily and a dish of blanc mange made of ground rice. Thick cakes sweetened and cooked in oil, with sesame seed on the top, and two huge spongecakes, nearly two feet in diameter, completed the feast and made one drink the sherbet and tea which followed. His Highness' house furniture was not in keeping with this profusion of food. With spoon and knife I had to demolish my meal, forks being unknown in these rural retreats of the nobility, among whom as with all Mohammedans the fingers are extensively employed. I beg to tell you that I did not use mine. . . . Salaams and pleasant talk such as can go on between two who feel the want of a common language occupied half an hour, when off I got to town and reached my house at 10 a.m. when the sun was too hot.'<sup>1</sup>

Kirk had been favourably impressed by Barghash. 'A man of energy, determination and intelligence,' he calls him in a later letter, 'much more intelligent than Majid.' That Kirk should have been asked to treat his sister was certainly significant. It meant that Barghash's Moslem prejudices were not insuperable. It meant, too, that his hatred of the British had lost its edge. Kirk believed that his involuntary residence at Bombay had taught him a better appreciation of 'European manners and customs', and that he was markedly more friendly to the British than Majid. The latter, at any rate, would have nothing to do with Kirk professionally, though he was constantly and seriously ill from chronic haemorrhage and epilepsy.

'The other day [Kirk wrote at the beginning of 1868] one fit followed another with so much violence that he remained insensible for ten days. He has not left his bed since, and he is, I

<sup>1</sup> K. to Miss C., 18. viii. 66.

fear, in a very dangerous state; but no European is allowed to see him.<sup>1</sup>

It was unsatisfactory to know that the Sultan was ill but not to know how ill, since his death would at once revive the old political tension in Zanzibar; and on one occasion Consul Churchill took Kirk with him to the palace on official business to get an opinion from merely seeing Majid and talking to him as to the state of his health.<sup>2</sup>

In the autumn of 1869 Kirk's medical services were needed on a scale which infinitely exceeded the capacity of a single or indeed of many doctors. Twice, if not three times, since the beginning of the century East Africa had been visited by an epidemic of cholera, in 1836 and 1858 and probably also in 1821. The source of these epidemics had been Mecca, where the congregation of many thousand pilgrims from all parts of the Moslem world created a focus of infection which was carried by returning pilgrims from port to port and thence radiated far and wide along the trade-routes of Africa and Asia. In 1858 the disease had broken out at Mecca in the summer, appeared on the Somali coast in the autumn, and, travelling south with the monsoon, reached Zanzibar by way of Lamu at the end of November. It had gripped the island till the following March. On February 12 Rigby had noted that 250 people were dying every day. He had afterwards reckoned the total number of deaths on the island at about 20,000. The coast had suffered equally. 'Many towns on the mainland were almost depopulated.' Happily, the interior seems to have escaped.<sup>3</sup>

If that was a grim enough experience for East Africa, the visitation of 1869-70 was far worse. Mecca again was the point of origin: there was an outbreak at the great annual ceremony, the Kourban Bairam, in the summer of 1865: but this time the radiation of death was slower. In 1866, while the disease was prevalent in Abyssinia and all up the Nile, it made no south-

<sup>1</sup> K. to Wylde, 10. i. 68: in private ownership.

<sup>2</sup> C. to G. of B., 26. ii. 68: K.P. Ic, 136.

<sup>3</sup> Russell, 79, 337. J. Christie, *Cholera Epidemics in East Africa*, chaps. ii-iv. This book contains a full and most interesting account of the epidemics, with their origin and the routes they followed. Dr. James Christie was practising at Zanzibar at the time of the 1869-70 epidemic and made an exhaustive personal inquiry into the subject.

ward move; but during the next two years it penetrated gradually, tribe by tribe and village by village, through the Galla country to the upper Juba. Thence it was carried through the Masai country by an inland trade-route to Pangani where it appeared in October 1869. The whole Arab coast was now doomed, since from Pangani the dhows, especially those crammed with slaves from the interior, were bound to carry the infection north and south. About the middle of November it arrived at Zanzibar. A month earlier, so Kirk reported to the Government of Bombay, the news had come that 'the Masai were dying of some malady that the Arabs at once named cholera'. A little later the outbreak at Pangani was known. No precautions were taken. Nothing was done to prevent dhows from the mainland landing their cargo at Zanzibar. The first case was at Mangapwani, 'the village where Pangani dhows first land'. Three days later, nine deaths had already occurred in Zanzibar town. 'To avert the malady', Kirk confessed, 'is utterly impossible; but we must do what we can to remove the accumulation of filth that spreads disease.'<sup>1</sup>

Little, if any, impression could be made by scavenging. The filth renewed itself from day to day—not only in the streets and on the beaches but in the houses and huts, in the market, at the brink of wells. People were soon dying so fast that they could not be more than half-buried, if at all. Their clothes were sold according to custom, and carried death from place to place. It struck very quickly. Many victims died within three or four hours of their feeling ill. By the end of the year the mortality, probably increased by the rigours undergone by faithful Moslems during the feast of Ramazan, had risen to about 400 a day. The new year brought no relief. The weather remained unusually hot and dry with no cleansing fall of rain. Day after day the sun poured down on streets deserted save by burial-parties and the greedy pariah dogs that followed them. The innumerable noises of the town died down. There were sounds at night, but not the old singing and drumming and laughter. The atmosphere, records an observer, was like that of a besieged city.<sup>2</sup>

Towards the end of January the scourge abated. In February

<sup>1</sup> K. to G. of B., 25, xi. 69: Zanzibar Archives, *Outward 1869*.

<sup>2</sup> Christie, chap. xi. K. to G. of B., 1 and 26. i. 70: Zanzibar Archives, *Outward 1869 and 1870*.

it seemed gone. In March, however, it re-appeared and continued with slowly lessening fury till the middle of July. Then at last the full measure of the tragedy could be assessed. Between 12,000 and 15,000, it was reckoned, had died in the town; between 25,000 and 30,000 in the island as a whole. It was literally a decimation. And the deaths on the mainland, not only on the coast but far up the trade-routes towards the Great Lakes, must have run into far higher figures. As in 1858-9, Kilwa suffered in particular from its business of exporting slaves. Penned in their compounds awaiting shipment they died at the rate of 400 a day. They were offered for sale 'at fifty shillings a dozen without finding a purchaser', and rushed up to Zanzibar in tight-packed dhows on the chance of fetching a price before they died and with the certainty of keeping the disease on the island alive. The northward limit of the epidemic was Socotra. Southwards it reached Mozambique and thence the Comoro Isles and the north-west of Madagascar, but it did not get beyond Quilimane on the mainland-coast. Had it made its way to Delagoa Bay, Natal and Cape Colony would have been in danger.<sup>1</sup>

In Zanzibar the Arabs, the Swahili, the native population and the slaves suffered more or less alike. So did the Moslem Indians, but, as in 1858-9, not the Hindus, who were protected by the personal cleanliness their faith required of them. Only one 'banyan' died. Among the Europeans and Americans, similarly, while those on shipboard in the harbour could not escape infection and nineteen succumbed, only one resident in the town was attacked—Kirk's infant daughter, as it happened—and she survived.<sup>2</sup>

The material loss to the business-community was heavy. Caravans bringing slaves and ivory to the coast were caught by the scourge on their way; and no porters could be got to attempt the journey inland. For a whole season trade was practically at a standstill. And, as if that infliction were not enough, the forces of nature dealt another blow to Zanzibar only two years later, not to life this time but, on a disastrous scale, to property. The

<sup>1</sup> Christie, chaps. xi-xii. K. to G. of B., 15. iii. 70: Zanzibar Archives, *Outward 1870*.

<sup>2</sup> Christie, 299-300, 418-9. K. to G. of B., 1. i. 70; ref. as above. The Rev. L. Fraser died at the U.M.C.A. quarters, but he caught the disease on his way from the coast to Zanzibar.

island lies about two degrees north of the normal cyclonic zone, but on the afternoon of April 15, 1872, a southwesterly gale which had been blowing since daybreak increased to hurricane force and, shifting round the points of the compass, raged till nightfall with undiminished frenzy. At an early stage the down-pour of rain converted the narrow streets of the town into rushing torrents while the wind brought down the walls of houses, swept native huts away, and uprooted regiments of trees. Of the second act or 'return gale' Kirk writes:

'The first gust drove in the windows of the Agency and of my quarters, broke open doors and threw tables and couches in confusion against the opposite walls. . . . As the sea rose, sheets of salt spray and rain drifted in at the broken windows and filled the rooms a foot deep with water. . . . The sea was driven with such force as to undermine and sweep away the whole embankment of stone and double row of wooden piles that protect the foundations of the English, German and American consulates. . . . The consular office was burst open by the wind, and a teak chest, in which many valuable documents were preserved, and all pigeon-holes, in which matters of current business were deposited, gutted of their contents. Next morning I recovered in the street many government orders and confidential memoranda together with the bulk of our mail which should have gone next day, but other documents of importance are utterly lost. . . . In my own quarters . . . the floor of the drawing-room was covered a foot deep in water in which books, pictures and china, etc., etc., formed a confused and sodden heap.'<sup>1</sup>

The repairs to the consulate cost £2,000;<sup>2</sup> but that was a trifle compared with the losses of the Arab land-owners. At least two-thirds of their clove and coco-nut plantations had been destroyed; and, since new trees would not bear fruit for many years, the loss was incalculable. All the ships in the harbour, moreover, with the single exception of the *Abydos*, bound for London, which managed with high steam-power to get out to sea, were sunk or wrecked on shore. The *Adèle O'Swald*, belong-

<sup>1</sup> K. to G. of B., 20. iv. 72, quoted in R. H. Crofton, *The Old Consulate at Zanzibar* (London, 1935), 52.

<sup>2</sup> Chief Sec., Bombay, to Zanzibar Agency, 4. ix. 72: Zanzibar Archives, *Bombay to Agency, 1868-72*.



ing to the leading German firm, Wm. O'Swald and Co., succeeded in escaping from the harbour but was driven ashore and lost with all hands. A London ship, the *Liberia*, was wrecked. About 150 Arab and Indian boats were sunk or stranded, many of them full of cargo. But the most signal disaster was the damage wrought to the little navy in which Seyyid Said, its creator, had taken a special pride and handed on as personal property to his successors. Its flagship, the frigate *Shah Allum*, was completely wrecked: so also was the *Suliman Shah*, just arriving from Bombay. Three steamships and a corvette were thrown ashore and more or less badly damaged. For the moment, at any rate, the Sultan's power as well as his pocket had seriously suffered: for, though the efficiency of his fleet as an instrument of war was doubtful, its master's authority over the Arab seaports on the coast was ultimately based on it.<sup>1</sup>

4

At the time of the hurricane Kirk had been six years at Zanzibar. He had found his feet there, mastered the technique of his official duties, made acquaintance with all the chief personalities of the island, and developed a considerable medical practice. Yet his position was not wholly satisfactory. In the first place he was becoming steadily more and more overworked. It was not so much the regular tasks that fell to him as vice-consul and medical officer: he was obliged, and he was ready enough, to help his chief. The combined duties of consul and political agent with a very meagre staff were enough to tax the strength of a healthy man in that climate, and, as it happened, the health of the men, one after another, who held the double office at the time, broke down. Hamerton, after years of intermittent illness, died at his post. Rigby's first radiant impressions of Zanzibar quickly faded: he soon discovered that in certain months the 'muggy', 'unwholesome', 'detestable' weather made him feel more dead than alive; he suffered repeatedly from malaria, jaundice and prickly heat; and in 1861, before three years were up, he was ordered away to save his life.<sup>2</sup> Playfair,

<sup>1</sup> K. to Gonne, 22. iv. 72: I.O. shelf 5, vol. 49, 655. Christie, 7-8. For the fleet, see *East Africa and its Invaders*, 297-8.

<sup>2</sup> Rigby's diary in Russell, 77-94.

his successor from 1863 to 1865, whom Kirk had met in the course of the Zambesi Expedition and liked and hoped to work under, was also driven away by dangerous ill-health some months before Kirk came out.<sup>1</sup> Seward, who 'acted' from 1865 to 1867, seems to have kept fitter, perhaps because he was a doctor. But Churchill, who arrived from Bombay in the summer of 1867, was scarcely ever well, and, before many weeks had passed, he was relying on Kirk—and on Mrs. Kirk too—to help him in copying correspondence and recording cases in court. At the end of the year he wrote to Bombay suggesting that Kirk should be appointed assistant political agent with sufficient salary to compensate him in future for the loss of private practice which the extra work entailed. After six months' cogitation the Bombay Government asked for more detailed information. In the past year, Churchill replied, there had been 80 civil suits in the Consular Court, 6 cases of bankruptcy, 13 criminal cases, and various petty suits: three Naval Courts had been held to deal with shipwreck and mutiny: and three captures of slave-ships had been adjudicated in the Vice-Admiralty Court—a total of 105 cases. Moreover, besides the normal consular work of which the Bombay Government were already aware, the consul had to deal with the registration of deeds of sale and mortgage and of emancipated slaves, with notarial acts, with shipping returns, with the notification of wrecks, with commercial statistics for the Board of Trade, and at the same time to maintain a regular correspondence both with the Foreign Office and the India Office. It was a formidable list, but it failed to secure Bombay's consent to a new item of expenditure. In June 1869, however, when Churchill was forced to take sick-leave, Kirk was appointed acting political agent and for over a year he shouldered the whole work of the office, consular and political, 'without a bit of assistance', as he told his friend, Dr. Hooker, at Kew, 'except that of my wife who is as good as any two clerks.' To add to the burden it was the time of the cholera, and it is proof of Kirk's remarkable powers of endurance that he got through those terrible months without a breakdown. When Churchill returned in August 1870, Kirk saw at once that he was not really fit for duty. In December he collapsed

<sup>1</sup> K. to Balfour, 5. xi. 63: Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh. K. to Dr. Hooker, 21. i. 66: Kew, *English Letters, 1866-1900*, 354.

again, and Kirk was once more left alone. It was a critical moment as it happened, for Majid had just died and Barghash, a man of different temper, had assumed the Sultanate. But Churchill had learned to trust his cool, level-headed lieutenant.

'I leave in charge Dr. Kirk [he wrote to Bombay] who has already so ably filled the post of acting political agent and consul during my first leave. I could not leave the agency in better hands, and I hope that, when the time comes for me to resign my appointment—for my health will not warrant my return to Zanzibar—his valuable services will be taken into consideration by the Government of Bombay. He has made himself thoroughly acquainted with the people and the country, and I may say without hesitation that the Government could have no better servant for the post.'<sup>1</sup>

It was, in fact, the decisive point in Kirk's career. He had been given, as he realised and confessed to Hooker, 'a fair chance of distinguishing myself'. As will appear in a later chapter, he took it. But the hope he confided to his friend of obtaining Churchill's post was long deferred. The appointment still rested with the Bombay Government, and at Bombay, Kirk wrote, 'I have no influence.'<sup>2</sup> And he certainly needed influence since it had recently been decided by the Government of India and confirmed by the India Office that medical officers should not as a rule be appointed to political agencies. Nor were high officials of the Indian Civil Service likely to make an exception in the case of a man, however strongly commended, who had never been in India, who was, so to speak, an 'outsider'. The Foreign Office, on the other hand, observed how quickly its campaign against the Slave Trade in East Africa was stiffened up when the interminable negotiations with the Sultan passed from Churchill's hands to Kirk's. 'I have to convey to you', wrote Lord Granville who had become Foreign Secretary in Gladstone's ministry on Lord Clarendon's death in 1870, 'my entire approval of your proceedings.' The change in Barghash's attitude, he added, had been due 'in a great

<sup>1</sup> C. to G. of B., 29. xii. 67, 13. vii. 68, 12. xii. 70, and (gazetting of K. as Acting P.A.), 12. vi. 69: Zanzibar Archives, *Outward Dispatches, 1867-8, 1870, Bombay to Agency, 1868-72*. K. to Dr. H., 22. ix. 69, 2. xii. 70: Kew, *English Letters, 1866-1900*, 276, 296.

<sup>2</sup> K. to Dr. H., 2. xii. 70: Kew, *English Letters, 1866-1900*, 296.

measure to the tact and discretion you have shown.<sup>1</sup> That was written in the spring of 1871, and more encouragement for Kirk was forthcoming in the autumn. It is unusual for commissions or committees of inquiry on large questions of policy to make recommendations with regard to individual officials, but the Select Committee of the House of Commons which, as will be seen, had been appointed to examine 'the whole question of the Slave Trade on the east coast of Africa', had soon realised the overriding importance of 'the man on the spot' at Zanzibar and had heard in the course of the evidence about Kirk's qualifications for the post. Churchill, seeking health at home, had told them about the service rule and expressed the fear that Kirk would not choose to stay 'in an out-of-the-way place like that' if he could never aspire to the Agency; and his going, he had added, 'would be a great misfortune'. The Committee agreed and the following paragraph appeared at the end of their Report:

'So complicated are our political relations at present with the Sultan, and so difficult will be the task of dealing with him, that they do not hesitate to advise that the services should be retained of the present acting political agent; having in mind his long and tried experience of Africa, its climate, its slave-trade difficulties, his knowledge of the Sultan, and his activity in conducting the greater part of the work of the department for some years, they would recommend that no technical rules of the service be allowed to interfere with his appointment as political agent at Zanzibar.'<sup>2</sup>

'You will, I think, be pleased', wrote Mr. C. Vivian, head of the Slave Trade department at the Foreign Office, at the end of 1871, 'to see in the report of the Committee that the value of your services is thoroughly recognised.' But, he went on, 'the Foreign Office can have no voice in the matter as the Treasury have refused us the means of sharing the expenses of the Zan-

<sup>1</sup> G. to K., 17. iii. 71: F.O. 84. 1344.

<sup>2</sup> *Select Committee's Report on East African Slave Trade* (No. 420 of 1871), x-xi. Churchill's evidence, *ibid.*, Q. 373-6. Naval officers serving in East African waters had the highest opinion of Kirk. Captain Colomb wrote: 'It is sufficient for me to say that all naval officers who have met him, either in an official relationship, in private friendship, or, which is more usual, in both, will heartily re-echo the recommendation of the Parliamentary Committee.' *Slave Catching in the Indian Ocean* (London, 1873), 382-3.

zibar Agency.' Meantime the Indian authorities had shown no intention of cutting the 'red tape'. Writing to Hooker in March, Kirk had freely confessed his anxiety lest, while the Foreign Office had told him to 'carry on at your own time in your own way', the delicate thread of his dealings with Barghash would be broken by the appointment of a 'Bombay man' in Churchill's place. 'A jolly mess an Indian will make who knows not a word of the language.' He was right about the appointment. A few weeks later the Bombay Government imposed the charge of Zanzibar on Major Way who had previously been posted at Muscat. It was, as it happened, too much for him. He 'took a pistol and blew his brains out at once'. So again Kirk's future was in-suspense. He realised that time was on his side; that the Slave Trade question was the dominant issue at Zanzibar; that the Indian authorities were not any less deeply involved in its suppression than the authorities in Whitehall but were unable to deal as firmly with its international aspects; that Zanzibar would soon become a Foreign Office, not an Indian agency. Nevertheless, after Way's appointment, as time went on and nothing happened, Kirk became more and more restless. Just at this period, moreover, he was suffering acutely from a disagreeable controversy about Livingstone's supplies;<sup>1</sup> and, to make matters worse, his health, it seemed, was not so impervious as he had hoped to the insidious dangers of Zanzibar. In 1872 he was ill with malaria and dysentery. It is not surprising, therefore, to find a quite unusual note of irritation and depression in his private correspondence at this time. 'Bombay is on a bad, bad line of policy.' An 'Indian' will 'make the common mistake of his cloth and think he is a little Almighty' in Zanzibar as if it were a subject Indian State. 'Bombay is hunting me down.' But those were the dark hours before dawn. Kirk was still, it is true, only acting political agent when Sir Bartle Frere arrived at Zanzibar on his historic mission in 1873; but one of its results, and not the least important for the future of East Africa, was to set Kirk firmly in the place he had proved his capacity to fill.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See p. 122, note 1, below.

<sup>2</sup> V. to K., 12. xii. 71; F.O. 84. 1344. K. to H., 10. iii. and 16. vii. 71; Kew, *English Letters, 1866-1900*, 300, 304-7, 318.

# IV

## THE REIGN OF SEYYID MAJID

(1856-1870)

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### I

Majid's rule was an example of the inevitable weakness of autocracy as a permanent system of government. He was not his father's equal: he could not do what his father had done. At Zanzibar, it is true, he maintained his personal ascendancy. Once the succession had been decided, the Arab malcontents acquiesced. The el-Harthi kept quiet. Barghash remained in seclusion. But the quality of the administration, mainly determined as it was by Majid's character and capacity, seems to have rapidly deteriorated. Justice is a decisive test; and very soon after Said's death not only had corruption become rife among the civil judges or *kadis*, but even in criminal cases and appeals which were decided by the Sultan himself it was evident that Majid's standards of right and wrong were different from his father's. It is hard to believe—to take two examples among others recorded by Rigby—that Said would have pardoned the murderer of his chief of police after only one night in jail or inflicted no punishment at all on the man who forged the Customs Master's name to an order for 150 dollars. Law and order, similarly, were less firmly maintained. The 'Northern Arabs' were always troublesome, but they had never defied Said's authority so contemptuously as they did Majid's. Yet with personal enemies or plotters against himself Majid could be ruthless enough. It was probably on Majid's orders, as has been seen, that the last of the arrested el-Harthi sheikhs died in prison. The writer of an intercepted letter to the Persian Gulf, declaring that 'Majid's fire has gone out' and looking forward to

sharing in the spoils of his realm, met with 'a speedy punishment, only to be obtained', Kirk drily noted, 'in despotic countries.'<sup>1</sup>

Said's control of the mainland had rested on his prestige more than on his power; and if Majid's control was weaker, it was only because he did not rank in Arab eyes so high as his great predecessor. Outwardly there was no change. Majid, like Said, claimed the overlordship of all the towns along the coast from Cape Delgado in the south to Warsheikh in the north, and in recognition thereof took his quota of their customs-duties. At such major ports as Mombasa, Kilwa and Lamu governors were still appointed by him and little garrisons posted. But the Somali towns seem to have become even more independent than they were in Said's time. 'At Merka alone', Kirk reported shortly after Majid's death, 'are there soldiers and a customs-house, and the hold that Zanzibar has there does not extend beyond the town.'<sup>2</sup> Mogadishu and Barawa, now important centres of an export trade in grain, accepted Majid's overlordship but their real master was nearer than Zanzibar. The whole countryside between Mogadishu and the Juba was controlled at this time by Ahmed Yusuf, a powerful Somali sheikh at Geledi, who commanded a force of some 40,000 tribesmen. Barawa indeed was compelled to pay Ahmed a subsidy to obtain the protection from assault and pillage which ought, one might suppose, to have been afforded them by Majid. Again, when a body of Somali came down from the neighbourhood of Cape Guardafui to found a new trading settlement near the island of Kismayu in 1868, they duly asked for and obtained Majid's assent: but he did nothing to help the settlement when it had been founded, though for some years it was engaged in desultory fighting with the Somali and Galla of the neighbourhood who resented the newcomers' intrusion into their preserves.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rigby's report and diary in Russell, 92-3, 330. Rigby thought the policeman 'the finest specimen of an Arab in Zanzibar'. For Said's justice, see *East Africa and its Invaders*, 325-6. Death of el-Harthi sheikh, see p. 32, above. Intercepted letter, K. to G. of B., 12. iv. 69: Zanzibar Archives, *Outward Dispatches*, 1869.

<sup>2</sup> K. to G. of B., 29. viii. 71, commenting on the copy enclosed of Barghash's contract with Ludha Damji for the collection of the duties from Tungi (near Cape Delgado) to Mogadishu: F.O. 84. 1344.

<sup>3</sup> K.'s Journal: 20. ii. 70. K. to Granville, 12. vii. 70: P.P. 1871. lxii. 753. Kersten points out that Barawa and Mogadishu accepted Majid's overlord-

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The disturbed state of this part of the coast was as bad for the trade of Zanzibar as it was for its ruler's prestige, and Kirk did his best to persuade Majid to exert his authority, especially at Kismayu, by force or bribery. His little fleet might not prove very formidable in a naval action; it was fortunate, perhaps, for its reputation that it never had to fight one;<sup>1</sup> but the Arabs of the coast had no warships at all, and their towns could have been safely bombarded from the sea and their trade cut off by a blockade. That trade, moreover, went mainly through the emporium of Zanzibar, and, whenever their merchants came to Majid's capital, they were, as Kirk bluntly put it, 'in his hands', while 'the more distant inland chiefs, such as Ahmed Yusuf, may always be influenced by presents and marks of attention'.

'I have long tried to induce His Highness to take an active interest in the affairs of those parts, and by the judicious use of money combined with a little force to regulate such disputes as damage the commercial prosperity of what will one day be one of the richest as it is one of the healthiest fields of Eastern Africa. . . . It is a matter of great moment to our Indian subjects, who are the chief traders on the coast, that some settlement should be made and a stop put to those wars by which they are so often the losers.'<sup>2</sup>

How the fierce free-spirited Somali would have reacted to Majid's intervention must remain a matter of speculation, for Majid preferred to 'let sleeping dogs lie'. But it is worth observing that on the coast, at any rate, the traditional suspicion and dislike of strangers seems at this period to have died down. When Rigby called at Barawa and Mogadishu on his homeward voyage in H.M.S. *Gorgon* in 1861—the first British vessel to be seen at either port since Owen's exploits in 1824–5—he found the Somali sheikhs apparently 'much gratified at the visit of a British ship of war'.<sup>3</sup> Kirk, too, was well received at those two ports when H.M.S. *Briton*, in which he had snatched a brief holiday,

ship because they needed the protection of his fleet, but were also dependent on the 'Sultans' of Geledi or Bardera because they controlled the inland trade: *Von der Decken's Reisen in Ost-Afrika*, i. 126.

<sup>1</sup> In 1870 the gunners had had no ball practice for fourteen years. K.'s Journal, July 1870.

<sup>2</sup> K. to Granville, 12. vii. 70; P.P. 1871. lxii. 753.

<sup>3</sup> Russell, 97. For Owen, see *East Africa and its Invaders*, chap. viii.



put in there in 1873. 'All the people on the beach were armed,' he wrote of Mogadishu, 'but this was their usual mode of appearing, and there was no sign of ill feeling': and at Barawa the people were so 'perfectly friendly' that Kirk made a day's excursion with some of the ship's officers across the sandhills and 'saw as noble a sight as I ever have seen in my life'—the inland plain stretching unbroken to the horizon.<sup>1</sup> There was a certain risk, however, in penetrating even so short a distance inland. A French trader was murdered near the mouth of the Juba in 1870.<sup>2</sup> And farther into the interior the fate of von der Decken and his companions<sup>3</sup> showed how dangerous it was for foreigners, however innocent their purpose, to intrude, and how little it availed them to be travelling with the full assent and commendation of the Sultan of Zanzibar. Arab traders did not venture into the Somali and Galla country; and it was only where Arab traders went that Majid's overlordship could be said to exist in any real sense at all.

At the centre of his dominions, however, along the main trade-routes from the coast these Arab traders were steadily pushing farther and farther westwards in the course of Majid's reign. The explorers met or heard of caravans beyond Lakes Nyasa and Tanganyika and up to the shores of Lake Victoria. And by these Arabs or half-Arabs, whether at a permanent 'colony' like Tabora or wandering far afield, Majid's overlordship seems to have been recognised as fully as Said's. His letters of commendation were everywhere respected. A leading Arab of Tabora told Speke in 1858 that, as he had 'come from his Sultan Majid, he was bound to render him any assistance in his power': and, when he was there again in 1861, the Arabs paid him a ceremonious call, 'recognising in me, as they said, a personification of their Sultan.'<sup>4</sup> Africans, likewise, as the Arabs moved about their country, acquired a respect for the distant overlord of these rich and powerful invaders. Tribes bordering on the main trade-routes for a hundred miles or so from the coast seem to have vaguely regarded him as their overlord too.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> K. to Frere, 11. v. 73: *P.R.G.S.*, xvii. 340-1.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 79, below.

<sup>3</sup> See pp. 113-4, below.

<sup>4</sup> *What led to the Discovery, etc.*, 316. *Journal of the Discovery, etc.*, 88.

<sup>5</sup> Livingstone, *Last Journals*, ii, 209.

According to Livingstone the Nyamwezi 'called themselves his subjects'. 'I am a child of the Sultan,' said one of their chiefs who had established a trading-post in the interior, to the southwest of Lake Tanganyika.<sup>1</sup> Far away, near Lake Bangweolo, Chief Casembe betrayed a marked anxiety for Livingstone's safety because he carried Majid's 'passport'.<sup>2</sup> Chief Kingomanga near Lake Nyasa showed his respect for Majid's authority by sending (as will be seen) the murderers of the German explorer, Roscher, to Zanzibar.<sup>3</sup> But this was an exceptional case, and normally, it seems, Majid's inland 'dominion' had little practical meaning, whether for Arabs or Africans. Lip-service was paid to his overlordship. His 'passports' were honoured. But he did not rule in the interior. He gave no orders. If he had, he could not have enforced them. Quite near the coast, indeed, his authority could be safely defied by warlike tribes. In 1857 the Masai raided and burnt and slew right down to Mombasa, and drove a force of some 150 men, including 'Baluchi' soldiers of Majid's army, to the shelter of its walls. In 1859 the Masai sacked Vanga, in 1871 they again came raiding within a few miles of Mombasa, and nothing happened.<sup>4</sup> In 1868 a war-party of another marauding tribe, akin to the Zulu, the Fiti, appeared in the neighbourhood of Kilwa and blocked its trade with the interior. Majid's garrison of 40, with about 200 armed slaves, marched out to fight them.

'A first encounter took place at a few miles' distance from the town with the outposts of the enemy, in which the naked horde was driven back. The Arab party advanced and repelled the enemy a second time, but there the soldiery stopped while the armed slaves, elated with victory, went on. The Fiti withdrew before them till they had advanced too far into the waterless plains to ensure an orderly retreat. They there attacked the slaves in good earnest and made them fly in terror. The soldiers, on seeing this *quasi* stampede, instead of offering resistance, joined the flying column, and those who reached Kilwa told the sad tale of their utter defeat. The report of the

<sup>1</sup> Livingstone, *Last Journals*, i. 280, 311; ii. 209.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 276.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 110, below.

<sup>4</sup> Christie, 210-11. Sir C. Eliot, *The East African Protectorate* (London, 1905), 143.

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number killed and missing varies between 40 and 200, but it is not likely that the fugitives were spared.' <sup>1</sup>

### 2

More striking evidence of Majid's weakness was afforded by a series of events which occurred in the course of the 'sixties in the Nyamwezi country. Arabs were involved this time as well as Africans, and the trouble broke out at the very heart of the commercial system on which the new-found prosperity of Zanzibar depended—in the neighbourhood of Tabora itself, the relatively old-established centre of the inland-trade, whence caravan-routes radiated to Lakes Tanganyika and Victoria. Nor was it a casual, fugitive trouble like the raids at Mombasa and Kilwa: it was a little war, an irregular, desultory, inconclusive war between the Arabs of Tabora and a powerful Nyamwezi chief, Manwa Sera; and it lasted five years. About 1859 Manwa Sera succeeded his father, Fundi Kira, as ruler of Unyanyembe, the country round Tabora; and in violation, so the Arabs maintained, of treaties they had made with Fundi Kira, he imposed a tax on their trade, and on their refusal to pay it forbade his tribesmen to supply them with grain. Thereupon the Arabs threatened to depose him and put his half-brother Mkisiwa on his throne. 'This I could not stand,' Manwa Sera told Speke in 1861: 'the merchants were living on sufferance only in my country. I told them so, and defied them to interfere with my orders, for I was not a woman to be treated with contempt.' The Arabs accepted the challenge, drove Manwa Sera from his 'palace', and duly installed Mkisiwa in his place. When Speke met Manwa Sera a few marches east of Tabora, he had been engaged for many months in harassing the trade-routes and attacking Arab caravans. Speke took a liking to him—'Manwa Sera, I must say, was as fine a young man as I ever looked upon'—and on arrival at Tabora he did his best to persuade the Arabs to come to terms with him. He found the whole aspect of the 'colony' changed since he had passed through it two years before on his return-march to the coast

<sup>1</sup> Churchill to G. of B., 4. iii. 68, enclosing a memorandum of Kirk on the Sita or Fiti whom he calls the Mavite and whom he had met with in the course of the Zambesi Expedition: F.O. 84. 1292.

with Burton. 'Instead of the Arabs appearing as merchants, as they did formerly, they looked more like great farmers, with huge stalls of cattle attached to their houses.' But these looted cattle were all the Arabs had got from the fighting. The natives of the neighbourhood had disappeared. Their villages were ruined and deserted. For many miles round Tabora the land lay untilled. And, to make matters worse, the country was suffering from a protracted drought. Famine was widespread. The Nyamwezi, Speke was told, were dying of starvation in all directions; while the Arab trade with the coast, already obstructed and endangered by Manwa Sera's operations, had been brought to a standstill by the shortage of food-supplies for the caravans. The wiser Arab leaders, therefore, welcomed Speke's intervention; and the peace-terms he proposed might have been accepted by both parties if Snay-bin-Amir, a wealthy and militant Arab, who possessed a private army of 400 slave gunmen, had not insisted on making one more attempt to come to grips with Manwa Sera and destroy him. The result was a grievous and humiliating blow to the Arabs. Part of their force was taken by surprise in the Ugogo country, about halfway between Tabora and the sea. Snay himself, five other Arabs, Jufa, the Indian partner of Musa, the rich and powerful 'banyan' of Tabora, and many slaves were killed. Elated by this triumph, Manwa Sera now declared he would not think of peace till he had hunted down the usurper and recovered his throne. So, when Speke left Tabora in the early summer of 1861, the 'war' was still in being. With his departure the curtain falls till Stanley lifts it again on his way to Ujiji in 1871. The fighting, he was told, had continued for five years and had only come to an end when in 1865 Manwa Sera was caught at last and beheaded.<sup>1</sup>

Nothing could demonstrate more forcibly the hollowness of Majid's and Barghash's dominion in the interior at any distance from the coast than these events. In the course of a few years the character of the relations between their Arab subjects at Tabora and the Africans in whose midst they lived was com-

<sup>1</sup> Speke, *Journal of the Discovery, etc.*, 77-112. H. M. Stanley, *How I Found Livingstone* (London, 1872), 267. For Musa's position at Tabora, see *East Africa and its Invaders*, 310-11.

pletely changed. In Said's time the Arabs had kept to their trade and held aloof from tribal politics. Now they were deeply involved in them and asserting their will by force of arms. Inevitably the native attitude towards them was transformed. Before, they had been regarded, except by the victims of their slave-raids, as no worse than strangers and intruders: now they were plainly enemies, and fear and hate of them were spreading fast inland. This was already a development of quite first-rate importance to the future of Zanzibar. Peace in that area was essential. The chief channel of trade and therefore of revenue flowed through it. Yet Majid did nothing to stop the 'war'. He allowed the quarrel to go on, despite the frequent interruption of trade it involved, until it ultimately petered out.

The reason is plain. Majid had not the force required for effective action at any distance inland. While the Arabs of the coast towns could be overawed at need by their suzerain's sea power, they had little to fear from him on land. In those days the army of Zanzibar was scarcely worth the name. Since military service, except in semi-feudal fashion at their ruler's call, was contrary to Arab custom, Majid, like Said before him, had to rely for a standing force on the mercenaries, known as 'Baluchis', whom they hired from the coastlands between India and the Persian Gulf. Of these Majid had at the end of his reign about 2,750, of whom 2,000 were stationed at Zanzibar, 580 at Lamu, and 180 at Mombasa.<sup>1</sup> Paid at the rate of 3 dollars a month, and more for the *jemadars*, this army cost some 108,000 dollars (about £24,000) a year: and it was scarcely worth it. The discipline of the rank and file was poor, their marksmanship erratic, their courage questionable. In Said's two campaigns on the coast, against Mombasa and against Pate, they had proved quite ineffective; and he had never wanted or needed to use them for an invasion of the interior.<sup>2</sup> In Majid's time, as has been seen, they fled before the Masai and Fiti. Is it likely that they would have faced the Arabs of Tabora and their hundreds of armed slaves?<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> K.'s Journal, 29. vi. 70. Of the 2,000 at Zanzibar, Kirk notes that 400 were 'kept by Ludha Damji', the Customs Master.

<sup>2</sup> The expedition to avenge the murder of Maizan in 1846 only had to march some 80 miles from the coast: *East Africa and its Invaders*, 354-6.

<sup>3</sup> Burton penned some characteristic sentences about the company of 'Baluchis' which he took with him on his expedition of 1857-9. 'Notwith-

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It is evident, then, that the Arabs at Tabora and Ujiji and all the other inland settlements were only dependent on Zanzibar in so far as they needed the advances of its 'banyans' to finance their caravans. They might honour their Sultan, but they could not be made to obey him against their will. Clearly the African mainland behind the coast-belt was in no sense governed from Zanzibar.

### 3

Said's successors were not only weaker than their father: they were poorer.

The public finance of Zanzibar was its ruler's personal affair. The Sultan was the State. The Treasury was indistinguishable from his private purse. The taxes were paid to him. The navy was as much his own property as his palaces, and its value was reckoned as an item on the credit side of his account. Like any of his subjects, moreover, he could make a private income from land-ownership and trade. Thus Said had been able to amass a substantial fortune by a variety of means. As Sultan he had received the proceeds of taxation. As a landlord he had cultivated cloves and other remunerative produce. As ship-owner he had done good business in the carrying-trade. And as merchant he had launched or shared in launching caravans into the interior in quest of ivory and slaves.

Of the wealth thus acquired Majid only inherited a portion, since it was divided up amongst Said's thirty-four surviving children: but Majid also obtained in trust the shares allotted to his younger brothers and sisters, to whom from time to time he made advances. Only a few figures are available for the early years of his reign—in 1860 his assets were valued at 425,000 dollars, his debts at 327,000, and his revenue at 206,000<sup>1</sup>—but, shortly before his death, Kirk drew up a more complete financial statement, based mainly on the unrivalled authority of Ludha Damji, who was both Customs Master and agent of the leading business-firm of Jairam Sewji. It appears that in

standing their affectation of military carriage their bravery was more than problematical; they were disciplined only by their fears. . . . In sickness they were softer than Indian *pariahs*. Under the slightest attack of fever they threw themselves moaning upon the ground.' *Lake Regions* (London, 1860), i. 177.

<sup>1</sup> *Proceedings of the Commission on the Disputes between Muscat and Zanzibar*, 77, 113.

1869 nine-tenths of the revenue was got from customs-duties. All goods imported into Zanzibar and all goods except slaves, ivory, and gum copal exported from the coast towns paid a flat rate of 5 per cent. The duties on slaves (2 to 4 dollars each), on ivory (1 to 15 dollars per *frasilah*),<sup>1</sup> and gum-copal ( $\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 dollars per *frasilah*) varied according to their place of origin and of sale. The collection of all these duties was first farmed out on contract by Said to the Indian firm of Wat Benia and then to that of Jairam Sewji's father. When Jairam took over the business about 1850, the contract was fixed at 110,000 dollars. On its renewal every five years it had steadily risen—to 140,000, 180,000, 240,000 and finally 310,000 dollars in 1869. There were only two other items of revenue, the head-tax paid by the native population of Zanzibar, which amounted in 1869 to 10,000 dollars, and the income from the produce of Majid's estates, mostly cloves, which amounted to 25,000 dollars. The total revenue, therefore, in 1869 was 345,000 dollars or roughly £72,850. As to expenditure, Majid's army cost, as has been seen, about 108,000 dollars a year. A substantial sum must also have been spent on the upkeep of his navy which consisted at his death of three small frigates, two converted merchants, and five or six sloops. Other items of expenditure were Majid's advances to his brothers, the gifts which he made to influential Arabs, and the blackmail which, as will presently appear, he paid to the 'Northern Arabs'. But, since no distinction was made between expenditure for public and for private purposes and since the amount of the latter was not ascertainable, Kirk could form no estimate of the annual surplus or deficit in Majid's 'budget'. Of his assets and debts at his death, however, a reckoning could be made. On the one hand, his property—some of which was sold, and some, like the navy, valued—was worth 610,000 dollars. On the other hand, the share of Said's legacy which he had not yet paid to his brothers amounted to 420,000 dollars, and he owed the firm of Jairam Sewji 423,000 dollars. So the liabilities on his estate exceeded its assets by 233,000 dollars (about £50,000).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> One *frasilah* = 35 pounds.

<sup>2</sup> Revenue, K.'s *Administration Report*, 1870: P.P. 1872. liv. 781-90. Position in 1870: K. to G. of B., 30. viii. 71: I.O. shelf 5, vol. 48, 485. Navy: K.'s Journal, July 1870.

Next to the cost of the army and navy the heaviest public charge on Majid's treasury was the annual subsidy of 40,000 dollars, which, it will be remembered, he had undertaken to pay to his brother Thwain at Muscat as an essential part of the Canning Award. At first, perhaps, it seemed a small price to pay for deliverance from the difficulties and dangers which had encompassed him in 1859; but, as time passed, the burden grew more irksome. He had borne it for four years when in February, 1866, a change of rulers was brought about at Muscat by more than usually abrupt and violent means. Salim, Thwain's son, murdered his father in his sleep and took possession of his throne.<sup>1</sup> In the light of past events it may be doubted whether Majid's fraternal feelings were deeply wounded; but he seized the chance not merely to repudiate the subsidy, but to revive his desire to intervene in the affairs of Oman.

'My brother Seyyid Thwain [he said to Churchill] has, as you are aware, been foully murdered by his own son who is now on the throne of Muscat. I only ask of the English Government to permit me to proceed to Oman to seek my brother's blood at the hands of Salim, his murderer. If this be too much, and if it be decided contrary to our holy law that Seyyid Salim shall reign in peace in his father's kingdom, then all that we solicit of Her Majesty's Government is that we hear nothing more of Salim the murderer or his claims.'<sup>2</sup>

To the Government of India the personal factors in the case were of minor importance. To maintain peace between Muscat and Zanzibar and the Canning Award as the basis of peace was their primary concern. Accordingly, when the news of Majid's attitude reached Simla in the spring of 1867, the Viceroy, now Sir John Lawrence, addressed his 'beloved and esteemed friend' in very blunt terms. The objections raised to continuing the payment of the subsidy were 'futile and utterly untenable'. The Award was 'a final and permanent arrangement', extending to both Majid's and Thwain's successors; and Salim had in fact

<sup>1</sup> Badger, cv. Salim asserted that his father had died of fever; but the British Indian authorities had little doubt of his guilt and hesitated for some time to recognise the parricide as his father's successor.

<sup>2</sup> C. to G. of B., 14. viii. 67; Majid to C., August, 67: F.O. 84. 1279.



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succeeded Thwain as Sultan of Muscat, he was in full possession of the throne, and 'as such he has been recognised by the British Government'. The Award must stand. 'It is incumbent upon Your Highness to meet this obligation.'<sup>1</sup>

This was virtually an order, and Majid obeyed it in his own manner. He would not give the parricide a single dollar, he told the Viceroy; but he would pay the subsidy to the Governor of Bombay. 'Let the British then, if they so please, bring on us shame by paying this money to Salim.'<sup>2</sup> So far, so good—though, as Churchill pointed out to the Government of Bombay, it simply meant an increase in Majid's debt to the firm of Jairam Sewji. Might not Rigby have been right, he added, in thinking that so large a subsidy would overstrain the finances of Zanzibar?<sup>3</sup> In any case the bargain soon broke down. In the course of 1868 Majid decided not to pay without a final appeal to the highest authority, and in November his envoy, Muhammad-bin-Salim, arrived in London with instructions to do what he could to induce Lord Stanley at the Foreign Office to take Majid's side against the imperious Viceroy.<sup>4</sup> He had with him the good wishes of the Agency at Zanzibar. Churchill was dubious, to say the least, as to the wisdom of trying to exact the subsidy, and Kirk was dead against it, mainly because Majid at this time (as will soon appear) was willing to make concessions in the matter of the Slave Trade. 'This mission', he wrote to Wylde, who dealt with the Slave Trade at the Foreign Office, affects us and our position here deeply. A refusal will not only lower our influence, but leave the Slave Trade suppression still hampered as before by the Treaties granting the power to "slave" along an immense extent of coast. The Sultan is so encouraged by other nations represented here in resisting payment of the subsidy that I cannot think he will pay it any longer even under protest as now. And India must know that force is impossible. We can only exclude by blockade our own Indian traders; for I am sure we will never venture in so scandalous a case to touch the American and French flags. You can easily imagine how desirous we are to

<sup>1</sup> Viceroy to Majid, 22. v. 67: K.P. Ia, 254.

<sup>2</sup> M. to Viceroy, 10. ix. 67; C. to G. of B., 16. ix. 67: F.O. 84. 1279.

<sup>3</sup> C. to G. of B., 4. iii. 68: F.O. 84. 1292.

<sup>4</sup> M. to Stanley, Mohammed-bin-Salim to Stanley, 24. xi. 68: F.O. 84. 1298.

hear the result of the Sultan's mission. If the concessions [on the Slave Trade] now offered to Churchill are obtained, it is a great step; but Majid will certainly give more—he will grant anything—to escape from the subsidy and remain friends with us.<sup>1</sup>

Muhammad-bin-Salim's arrival was quickly followed by a change of government, and it was Lord Clarendon, not Lord Stanley, who received him. The upshot was not discouraging. Majid's envoy was not granted an audience of the Queen, but he took back to Zanzibar a personal letter in which she informed Majid that 'our disposition is to view with favour the wishes of Your Highness, so far as they are consistent with engagements we have already contracted.'<sup>2</sup> Clarendon wrote in the same terms; and Majid was justified in supposing that, pending discussion with the Government of India, he would not be pressed to pay the subsidy. And soon he had a new and better excuse. In the autumn of 1868, Azzan-bin-Kais, Governor of *er-Rastak*, suddenly asserted the claims of his own branch of the *Al-bu-Said* family to the throne, and in the course of the next twelve months he captured Muscat, drove Salim into ignominious exile, and mastered most of Oman. It was not till the beginning of 1871, as will be seen, that the succession was restored to the branch of the *Al-bu-Saidi* who had previously held it without a break since 1791. Meantime, since the Government of India refused to recognise Azzan's assumption of the throne as it had with some reluctance recognised Salim's, there could be no question of a subsidy.<sup>3</sup>

It was not only on its financial side that the settlement of 1861 was strained by events in Oman. Both at Muscat and at Zanzibar the idea of reuniting a realm so recently divided inevitably revived. At Zanzibar the practical advantages of the partition were obvious enough. It had no revolutions. Its prosperity was steadily increasing. But Canning's knife had left a sentimental wound. Zanzibar, with all its charm, was not historic Muscat. Its dominions were African, not Arab. And were not the Arabs

<sup>1</sup> K. to W., 26. x. 68: in private ownership.

<sup>2</sup> Clarendon to Mohammed, 9 and 15. xii. 68; C. to Majid, and Queen to Majid, 15. xii. 68: F.O. 84. 1298.

<sup>3</sup> Badger, cxii-cxviii. A genealogical table of the *Al-bu-Said* family will be found at the end of this book.

of Oman, poor, fanatical, piratical, turbulent as they were, better and purer Arabs than the 'colonists' of East Africa? This sentiment was certainly one of the reasons for Majid's lenient treatment of the 'Northern Arabs'. It was partly, no doubt, because he was afraid of them that he not only tolerated their lawlessness but actually disbursed among their leaders every year a substantial sum of money. It was as much as 15,000 dollars in 1860 and not less than 180,000 dollars in 1869.<sup>1</sup> But that was not mere blackmail. Writing of Majid's efforts to meet the British Government's demands for the prevention of slave-stealing by the 'Northern Arabs', Kirk pointed out that the Sultan's position was 'one of peculiar embarrassment'. 'Anxious to keep the good opinion of the English at a time when he has much to ask of us, he still hankers after a good name among the people of Oman whom he looks on with justice as a race superior to their descendants, the Arabs of Zanzibar.'<sup>2</sup> If that was his frame of mind, Majid might acquiesce in Oman's severance from Zanzibar as long as it was ruled by a member of his family; but he was bound to resent its passing into the hands of a usurper. When Thwain was murdered, he thought, as has been seen, of intervention. The temptation must have been far stronger when Azzan-bin-Kais seized the throne.

Majid, however, kept his head. He knew how expensive and interminable an adventure in Oman might prove to be; and, like his father before him, he was not prepared to quarrel with the British Government. He hardened his heart, accordingly, against the 'Northern Arabs'. As early as 1864, while Thwain was still alive, he had not only prohibited the export of slaves from any part of his dominions for the duration of the 'monsoon', but had forbidden his subjects 'to rent their houses to the people of the north employed in stealing slaves'.<sup>3</sup> In 1868, not long before Salim's expulsion, he wrote to the sheikhs of the Arabian coast that any of their dhows putting in at his ports without papers to prove they were engaged in lawful trade would be assumed to be after slaves and burnt forthwith; and on the Queen's birthday two such dhows were actually burned

<sup>1</sup> *Proceedings of the Disputes Commission*, 119. K. to G. of B., 4. iv. 70: *P.P.* 1871. lxii. 747.

<sup>2</sup> K. to G. of B., 22. iv. 69: *P.P.* 1870. lxi. 753.

<sup>3</sup> Notifications of Jan. 1, 1864: *S.P.* lv (1864-5), 1146.

at Zanzibar.<sup>1</sup> Two years later, when Azzan was master of Muscat, Majid finally gave up his costly custom of giving money to the northerners. It was obvious by then that he had made his choice. He had turned his back on Oman; and it was easier to stop currying favour with its tribesmen if he no longer thought of invading their country and declaring himself their ruler. Twice, indeed, as has been seen, he was tempted. But he said nothing more of taking vengeance on Thwain's murderer; and, if Azzan's provocation was harder to resist, he did resist it. In 1869 it was rumoured at Zanzibar that the Sultan was preparing to expel the usurper from Muscat and restore his own family to the throne, just as in 1870 it was rumoured at Muscat that Azzan was intending to attack and annex Zanzibar. And in view of that earlier rumour, Kirk took the precaution of making it 'plainly understood that no such adventure could be tolerated by the Indian Government'. But he did not himself believe that Majid had any intention of trying to upset the territorial basis of the Canning Award. That basis still stood, though the cement, perhaps, had not yet had time to set, when Majid died. And of its rightness Kirk at that time had no more doubt than Coghlan or Rigby. 'It is the interest of Zanzibar', he wrote, 'to have as few relations as possible with Eastern Arabia.'<sup>2</sup>

## 5

By terminating the dispute between the two Arab States, the Canning Award had also checked the growth of a dangerous political rivalry between the French and British at Zanzibar; and at the end of Majid's reign this international side of the settlement had proved at least as durable as the inter-Arab side. The French Government loyally maintained the self-denying Anglo-French Declaration of 1862. Among the Arabs of Zanzibar, it is true, there was still an anti-British group—it might almost be described as the regular 'opposition' since Majid's policy accorded with British policy on all vital matters—and this group

<sup>1</sup> M. to Churchill, 3 and 20. v. 68; C. to G. of B., 8 and 24. v. 68: F.O. 84. 1292.

<sup>2</sup> Letters *re* Majid's plans found on a captured slave-dhow, 12. iv. 69; K. to G. of B., 22. iv. 69: P.P. 1870. lxi. 753, 757. K. to G. of B., 29. iv. 69: Zanzibar Archives, *Outward*, 1869. K. to G. of B., 4. iv. 70: P.P. 1871. lxii. 746-7.

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was still 'generally called the French party'.<sup>1</sup> But there is no record in these years of French political intrigue. No rumours are reported of French designs on the coast. The French consul is no longer the British agent's *bête noir*. If there is friction, it is only about the Slave Trade. If there is rivalry, it is purely commercial.

'It is impossible', wrote Kirk in 1871, 'to obtain accurate and reliable statistics of the trade of Zanzibar, everyone being interested in representing the imports and exports as less than they actually are.' The following table of imports into Zanzibar from Europe and India gives the rough estimates for 1863, 1865 and 1867.<sup>2</sup>

	1863	1865	1867
	£	£	£
United Kingdom	18,300	45,000	66,600
British India	144,700	145,500	91,000
Indian States <sup>3</sup>	24,400		
United States	9,500	30,800	66,000
France	28,100	33,800	14,800
Germany <sup>4</sup>	36,400	75,400	85,300
Total	261,400	330,500	383,700

The following table shows the exports for 1860 and 1864, again in rough figures.<sup>5</sup>

	1860	1864
	£	£
United Kingdom	5,500	50,000
British India	103,900	137,300
Indian States <sup>3</sup>	69,600	74,300
U.S.A.	118,700	73,400
France	55,000	49,800
Germany <sup>4</sup>	35,800	52,900
Total	388,500	437,700

The shipping statistics are more exact. The following are the numbers and tonnage of ships putting in at Zanzibar in 1859, 1866 and 1871:<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> C. to G. of B., 26. ii. 68: F.O. 84. 1292.

<sup>2</sup> K.'s *Journal*, 1870. K.'s *Administration Report* for 1870: P.P. 1872. liv. 783.

<sup>3</sup> Mainly Cutch.

<sup>4</sup> Mainly Hamburg.

<sup>5</sup> P.P. 1867. lxvii. 299.

<sup>6</sup> Rigby's *Report on the Zanzibar Dominions* (P.P. 1863. lxx. 239-51) gives the figures for 1866 are in P.P. 1867. lxvii. 299. K.'s copy contains the figures for 1871 in his handwriting.

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	1859		1866		1871	
	No.	Tons	No.	Tons	No.	Tons
British <sup>1</sup>	1	493	19	6,598	17	10,459
U.S.A.	35	10,890	5	2,515	8	4,250
French	12	3,066	16	3,772	11	5,450
German	17	4,428	16	5,282	17	7,467
Total	65	18,877	56	18,167	53	27,626

The most striking fact that emerges from these figures is the growth of British trade. A certain amount of British manufactured goods had been imported into Zanzibar indirectly by French, German and British Indian ships before 1859; but no direct import trade had been established by then, and only one British merchant-ship visited Zanzibar in that year.<sup>2</sup> In 1867, on the other hand, British imports are third on the list and roughly equal with American, while the tonnage of British shipping has risen to the first place. If, moreover, the trade of British India and of Indian States under British protection is added to that of Britain, the 'whole British interest', as Kirk calls it, was more than twice the German and nearly thrice the American.<sup>3</sup>

The great bulk of the imports consisted of cotton cloth, which accounted for 65 per cent. in 1867. Of a total importation worth 1,345,850 dollars, British India accounted for 344,500, Germany 334,000, Indian States 264,400, the United States 237,000, France 89,900, and the United Kingdom (directly) only 25,000. Though British India still heads this list and the Indian States are third, Kirk points out that the imports from India are falling. 'Of late', he notes, 'it has been clearly seen that the cotton manufacture of Cutch and Bombay cannot compete with the cheap cloth of Europe, and the natives ascribe the yearly increasing number of Cutch emigrants to the ruin of the native cotton trade.' The second largest item of imports was beads of which 95,600 dollars' worth were imported in 1867, 87,000 from Germany and 5,100 from France. Cloth

<sup>1</sup> Excluding British Indian. The tonnage in 1859 was 3,619 less than in 1858 owing to the cholera epidemic and political disturbances.

<sup>2</sup> Rigby's *Report*, 23-4.

<sup>3</sup> K.'s *Administration Report*: P.P. 1872. liv. 783. As Kirk points out, the excess over the German total is still greater if allowance is made for indirect British imports.

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and beads took the place of currency in the interior, and all caravans were loaded with them.<sup>1</sup>

There was little variation in the export trade of Zanzibar during Majid's reign. Ivory still held the lead, followed by cloves, slaves, coconuts, gum-copal, sesamum seed and cowrie shells. In 1867 the value of the ivory exported was 663,500 dollars, of the cloves 321,000, of the coconuts 225,000, of the gum-copal 100,000, of the sesamum seed 100,000, and of the cowrie shells 98,000.<sup>2</sup> The slave-export will be dealt with in Chapter VII.

These exports had been the stock-in-trade of Said's day. There was nothing new, as yet, in the economic exploitation of East Africa. Stories of mineral wealth to be found on the mainland were told at Zanzibar from time to time as they had been told before; but, as before, they did not stand investigation. 'A certain Mr. Papino', for example, a few months after Majid's death, tried to persuade the French business-men at Zanzibar to open up trade with the interior of Somaliland by way of the River Juba. He professed 'to have held an important position among the Somali', and he spoke of coal-mines near 'the populous city of Juba', where he had himself 'found coal of a quality pronounced by Sir Roderick Murchison to be as good as Newcastle'. There was gold, too, 'to be found in large quantities on the banks of the river'. The Frenchmen were sufficiently credulous to send a party of three men to the Juba. One of them was killed by a strange Somali who paid off on the white man a grievance he had against an Arab. The other two returned empty-handed to Zanzibar. Mr. Papino, reported Churchill, 'is no more nor less than an impostor.'<sup>3</sup>

The discovery of coal or gold would have restored the fortunes of French trade. As it was, its volume steadily declined. Before the Napoleonic War such European commerce as there was in East Africa had been wholly in French hands. Now the British, the Germans and the Americans were all doing better than the French. In one respect, however, for the last five years of Majid's reign, they had an advantage over all their rivals. Majid, it appears, levied a transit-tax of 15½ per cent. on the value of all mainland produce coming from his coast-ports to Zanzibar, and about 1865 the French consul persuaded him

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, 783-4.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 785.

<sup>3</sup> C. to Granville, 8. xi. 70: *P.P.* 1872. liv. 777.

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that such goods should be covered by the article of the Commercial Treaty concluded by Said with France in 1844 which provided that duties levied on French imports should not be more than 5 per cent.<sup>1</sup> It seems that the other consuls were unaware of this concession, and it was not till 1869 that Kirk was forced to look into the matter owing to its reaction on British Indian shipping. Virtually all the trade with the coast was carried in dhows, and in 1867 not only Arab owners of dhows, but British Indian owners also, began to obtain a French consular 'pass' and the right to fly the French flag in order to escape the higher duties. Once started, this simple procedure quickly spread. 'In the last three years', reported Kirk in 1870, 'we have lost one-fourth the number of British-owned coasting-vessels, and the French flag, formerly unknown, has correspondingly increased.' Since the equality of all foreign trade at Zanzibar was guaranteed by 'most favoured nation' clauses in the respective treaties, Kirk submitted a firm protest to the Sultan. He took the view that the French Treaty had been misinterpreted, and that the restriction to a duty of 5 per cent. applied only to goods imported from outside the Sultan's dominions, but he did not raise that question nor dispute the Sultan's right to levy a transit-tax. He only argued that whatever duties were levied should be at the same rate on goods carried in British-owned ships as in French-owned. To this Majid had no answer. It would mean a loss of as much as 40,000 dollars a year in revenue; but, as Kirk pointed out and Ludha Damji himself admitted, the same loss would occur under the existing system since in a few years' time 'the whole coast-trade would be carried on under the French flag'. So Majid gave in. Since the imposition of a higher duty on French dhows would mean controversy with the French consul, he chose the easier course of reducing the duty on British dhows. All were now to pay the flat rate of 5 per cent. In reporting the quick and happy outcome of these negotiations to the Government of Bombay, Kirk submitted for consideration 'whether the great sacrifice made by His Highness does not merit some special recognition'. But there was no time for that. A few months later Majid died.<sup>2</sup>

While the French share in the trade of mid-East Africa was

<sup>1</sup> Text of the Treaty: *S.P.* xxxv (1846-7), 1011.

<sup>2</sup> K. to G. of B., 4. iii and 8. iv. 70: *P.P.* 1871. lxii. 740-2, 747-8.



falling—Rigby thought it would ‘probably cease altogether in a few years’<sup>1</sup>—the German share was rising. In Rigby’s day, as has been seen, there were more German business-men at Zanzibar than of any other nation. Between 1863 and 1867 the value of German imports was more than doubled. And in 1871 Kirk reported that Herr Schultz, the German consul, was coming back from ‘leave’ on a steamship which was to engage in the coastal trade.

‘Germany is going ahead and I shall not be surprised to find a German colony there [on the coast] soon. As it is, all the four steamships and two steam-launches [at work along the coast] are managed by German officers and engineers, and they are setting up a workshop on shore. This gives the German consul as much to do with the Sultan as the Hindus give us. If it is peace for a year or two, Indian trade will get a severe blow in this quarter. All that transit trade must cease as the Germans and French can bring goods better direct from home.’<sup>2</sup>

Four months before Kirk wrote those words the Franco-Prussian War had ended; and the consulate, which from 1860 to 1867 had belonged to the Hanseatic Republics and from 1867 to 1871 to the North German Confederation, was now the consulate of the German Empire.

Meantime the rapid development of communications was bringing East Africa into far closer touch with Europe than it had ever been before. When Majid came to the throne there was no regular steamship service connecting Zanzibar with any other port and consequently no regular post. In 1860 Rigby complained bitterly—and Coghlan backed his complaint—that the growth of British trade in East Africa was almost impossible without a better postal service.<sup>3</sup> He suggested that a schooner manned by lascars would suffice to link Zanzibar with the Seychelles where the Aden-Mauritius mail-boats called. The

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1863. lxx. 241.

<sup>2</sup> K. to Churchill, 25. ix. 71: F.O. 84. 1344.

<sup>3</sup> R. to C., 15. x. 60; C. to G. of B., 17. xii. 60: F.O. 54. 18. Rigby gave the following instance of the handicap to trade. In 1859 a Bombay firm chartered a ship to take goods from Zanzibar to London, but the letter of advice, sent *via* Aden, did not reach Zanzibar until after the ship had arrived; consequently, the firm’s agent had no cargo prepared and the foreigners, fearing British competition, got prices raised so much (in some cases by 40 per cent.) that no cargo could be purchased except at a ruinous loss.

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Indian authorities were sympathetic; so was the Foreign Office; but the Postmaster-General was discouraging on the ground that the new service would not pay its way. The Treasury accepted this opinion, and the Foreign Office was not prepared to argue that political considerations positively required the adoption of the project.<sup>1</sup> When Playfair succeeded Rigby, however, in 1863 an arrangement was made for a naval sloop to carry a monthly mail between Zanzibar and the Seychelles.<sup>2</sup> But this proved only temporary, and it was not till 1871, a year after Majid's death, that Kirk, who had been 'long convinced of the great importance of regular communication between Zanzibar and some station on one or other of the mail routes', was able to report that a regular service to the Seychelles and back had been established. But this need, obvious and urgent as it was, had not been met by the British authorities in England or in India. It was the new Sultan Barghash who, to Kirk's 'great satisfaction' had provided a steam-yacht of his own for the purpose.<sup>3</sup>

By this time a connexion with Aden had become even more desirable than a connexion with the Seychelles; for the process of tying all the world together in a network of electric telegraph lines had now begun. In 1864 Constantinople, whence four lines radiated across Europe, was linked through Irak and Persia with the Persian Gulf, and in 1865 connexion with India was established by a submarine cable from the Gulf to Karachi. In 1870 a British cable line ran all the way from Falmouth to Bombay through the Mediterranean and the Red Sea with only one break—across Egypt. Contact with Aden, moreover, meant contact with the fast improving steamship services for mails, goods and passengers from London, Marseilles and Brindisi to India *via* Alexandria and Suez. In 1866 the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company was operating with a fleet of fifty-seven ships, mostly in eastern waters. It had obtained the contract for the British mail, for which it maintained a weekly service to Calcutta and Madras and a fortnightly service, soon also to be weekly, to Bombay. The average time taken between London and Bombay was now only twenty-four days.

<sup>1</sup> P.M.G. to Treasury, 21. vi. 61; Treasury to F.O., 6. viii. 61; F.O. memoranda, 15 and 26. viii. 61; F.O. 54. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Playfair to F.O., 3. iii. 63; F.O. 54. 20.

<sup>3</sup> K. to Granville, 25. vii. 71; *P.P.* 1872. liv. 823.

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In 1863 an old-established Scottish firm at Calcutta, with seventeen ships at its disposal, began to compete with the P. and O., especially in the western Indian Ocean, under the name of the British India Steam Navigation Company. Two years earlier the French *Compagnie des Services Maritimes des Messageries Impériales* had extended its connexion with Egypt into Indian waters, and in 1866, with twelve swift ships and a subsidy for the French mail, it was rivalling the business of the P. and O., especially in passenger-traffic.<sup>1</sup>

Towards the end of Majid's reign the importance of linking East Africa with Aden was immensely enhanced by the penetration of the one great obstacle that had barred the direct sea-route between Europe and the shores of the Indian Ocean. On November 17, 1869, one of the two outstanding dates in the history of sea-communications, the first ships steamed through the desert from the Mediterranean to the Gulf of Suez. Hitherto the unbroken voyage from Europe to the East had perforce been made by way of the Cape of Good Hope. Now the distance by water from England to Ceylon was reduced by more than half; and that meant a corresponding fall in the cost of transport, both in time and in fuel, to all parts of the Indian Ocean and beyond.<sup>2</sup> It was now easier for mails and merchandise, for business-men and tourists, for missionaries and officials, and, at need, for soldiers to play their part in the relationship of Europe with Asia—and with Africa too. Before the canal was cut, the sea-way up and down East Africa had been literally a back-water. Soon after the first Portuguese explorers had rounded the Cape and felt their way up the coast, European shipping had learned to strike straight out across the Indian Ocean; and the chief reason why European contact with East Africa in the first half of the nineteenth century had been so much more recently established and was still so much slighter than with West Africa was the mere difference in distance. Lagos is 4,260 miles from Liverpool; Zanzibar, round the Cape, is 8,850 miles from Southampton. The East African coast, it is true, still lay aloof from the main track of communication with India by the new

<sup>1</sup> For details see H. L. Hoskins' invaluable *British Routes to India* (New York and London, 1928), chaps. xv-xvi.

<sup>2</sup> This saving in cost has been counterbalanced by the high tolls charged for the use of the canal. See Sir A. Wilson, *The Suez Canal* (Oxford, 1933), 94, 169.

canal ; but, while East Africa could never compete with India in anything of importance, the fact that it was now over 2,000 sea-miles nearer to the ports of Europe made it a more 'practical proposition' for European interests. It set it, so to speak, on the map of European politics and economics.

The importance of a canal through the Isthmus of Suez to East Africa had been clearly foreseen in 1856 by a Frenchman, Captain Guillain, who had spent some years on the coast. He recognised that the main route eastwards from Suez, the route to India and the Far East, would be mainly in British hands. 'It is the English flag one meets at every stage on the long voyage from Aden to Japan or to New Zealand.' But he contemplated an 'African branch of the great sea-way' which could be 'dominated by French interest', operating from Bourbon, Madagascar and the Comoro Islands.<sup>1</sup> By 1869, however, as has been seen, French interest in mid-East Africa, both political and economic, had declined, and it was in British quarters that the idea of an 'African branch' from Aden was revived—not in Britain itself, nor in British India, but at Capetown. In 1870 a number of articles and letters appeared in the *Cape Argus*, urging that the mail-steamers from England to South Africa should now make the circuit of the continent, coming out alternately by the Atlantic and the Suez Canal. Apart from such minor advantages as its scenic and historical interest, the adoption of the eastern route would benefit Cape Colony and Natal, not only by bringing the telegraph at Aden, with its means of instant world-communication west or east, within seventeen days of East London and fifteen of Durban, but also by enabling South African mails to reach India and the Far East by way of Aden instead of all the way round by England. Nor, it was argued, would only South Africa benefit. 'Lesseps' grand work would be made conducive to the civilising of Eastern Africa by commerce.' 'There seems good reason to believe that the eastern coast of Africa will within the next twenty years receive much more attention both from the commercial and philanthropic worlds than it does now. . . . No line of coast in the world with equal resources in the background is more out of reach of anything like systematised communication.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *East Africa and its Invaders*, 457.

<sup>2</sup> *Argus*, 3. ix. 70: reprinted with other extracts in *P.P.* 1872. liv. 835-40.

It was mainly the commercial merits of this scheme for a circular voyage that were expounded to the readers of the *Argus*; but the notion had sprung from conversation between Mr. D. C. Stevens of Capetown and Mr. E. Layard, who was serving as British Slave Trade Commissioner there. And it was on humanitarian grounds that Layard commended this proposal to the Foreign Office 'as the means of opening up the east coast of Africa, Madagascar and the Comoro Islands not only to trade but to the spread of civilisation and the abolition of slavery'. As regards the suppression of the Slave Trade, 'I believe', he wrote, 'much better results would accrue from subsidising a company to run steamers as suggested than spending double the sum in increasing our squadron on that coast.'<sup>1</sup> This combination of arguments prevailed, and by the end of 1872 the British India Company were providing a monthly mail service between Aden and Durban *via* Zanzibar.

It was only natural that in developing the new advantages of the Suez Canal not only along the main route to the East but also down the 'African branch' the lead should have been taken by British shipping. The Canal was the almost singlehanded achievement of one great Frenchman; it had been mainly financed by French investors; but the brilliant company of European, Turkish and Egyptian representatives who attended the opening ceremonies bore witness to the international character of the enterprise. It was meant to serve and it has served all the sea-faring peoples of the world on an equal footing. Inevitably, however, it has been most used by the nation which has done most business with the East; and for the first few years nearly 75 per cent. of the shipping passing through it was British shipping. Inevitably, too, the safety of it and the world's free use of it have been mainly guaranteed by British sea-power and by British influence in the countries round about it. Thus the acquisition by the British Government in 1875 of a large block of shares in the company controlling the canal was only a confirmation of a pre-existing fact—that, economically and politically, the British Empire was more closely interested in the new waterway than any other Power.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> L. to Vivian, 2. x. 71: *P.P.* 1872. liv. 833-5.

<sup>2</sup> Hoskins, chaps. xiv and xviii.

# THE ACCESSION OF SEYYID BARGHASH (1870)

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## I

Majid's personal relations with British officials at Zanzibar seem to have been friendly. It is true that Rigby, who had the crusader's temperament, became more and more impatient with Majid's shifts and evasions in the matter of the Slave Trade until at last, when he left Zanzibar a very sick man, he let his simmering anger boil over in his journal. 'Paid my farewell visit to the Sultan, and I hope never to see the false vile scoundrel in this world again.' If Rigby was hot, Majid, just as naturally, was cold. He welcomed the troublesome consul's departure as much as he had welcomed his arrival. 'In order to show his ill-feeling at my interference with the Slave Trade,' Rigby's journal runs on, 'the Sultan paid me no farewell visit on my departure, fired no salute, and showed by his treatment of myself and the officers of the *Gorgon* that he thought that he would not be subjected to any more pressure to uphold his treaties.' But, as Rigby admits, the resentment did not last. Majid sent him 'a very handsome gold-mounted sabre', and when he dispatched his mission to England in 1868, he asked the Foreign Office if Rigby could be commissioned to look after it.<sup>1</sup>

'His Highness', Kirk wrote later, 'is more than usually warm in his expression of what I believe to be his real liking for the English in all except Slave Trade suppression, replying personally to all communications relating to current business and inviting me to visit Dar-es-Salaam and enjoy his hospitality.'<sup>2</sup> And, though Majid could not earn all the tributes paid to his

<sup>1</sup> Russell, 94-6.

<sup>2</sup> K. to G. of B., 4. x. 69. K.P. Ie, 14.

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father's courtesy and benevolence by visitors to Zanzibar,<sup>1</sup> he seems always to have created a favourable impression.

British policy, however, demanded more than friendliness from the ruler of Zanzibar; for, as will presently appear, the dominant objective of British policy in East Africa was still, as of old, the suppression of the Slave Trade, and for that a Sultan was needed who had not only the sense to see that the British Government was determined to attain that objective and was strong enough in the last resort to enforce its will, but also the courage to accept the inevitable and face the outcry of his less far-seeing Arab subjects. Now Barghash had proved himself in the disturbances of 1859 a stronger man than Majid, and, in Kirk's belief at any rate, he had outgrown the anti-British feelings he had then shown. If, then, he could be convinced that the price of British friendship and protection was the suppression of the Slave Trade, he might prove, when his time came, a more effective instrument of British policy than his timid, vacillating brother.

These considerations explain the measures taken by Churchill and Kirk when on October 7, 1870, they were warned by Majid's chief counsellor, Suliman-bin-Ali, that his master was dying. The succession, it will be remembered, was not determined by any law or custom of inheritance. It depended on popular assent. And, though Barghash was the only obvious claimant to the throne in Zanzibar, there were Arabs, notably the el Harthi, who would certainly oppose him; and it was not impossible that his elder brother, Turki, if he succeeded—as in fact he did a few months later—in wresting the sultanate of Muscat from Azzan, might be tempted by the idea, still, as has been seen, alive in Arab minds, of reuniting Zanzibar with Oman. British support, therefore, though not so essential as it had proved in Majid's case, was worth something to Barghash; and its value was heightened at the critical moment by two fortuitous events. Just at that time a British man-of-war happened to put in at Zanzibar: and just at that time arrived the 'astounding news', as Churchill called it, of Sedan.<sup>2</sup> In 1859 the dominance of British influence at Zanzibar had been disputed. Clearly that could not happen now. And at the British Agency it

<sup>1</sup> *East Africa and its Invaders*, 327-8.

<sup>2</sup> C. to G. of B., 8. x. 70: Zanzibar Archives, *Outward*, 1870.

seemed that everything conspired not only to bring about a quick and peaceable succession but to advance a long step further the crusade against the Slave Trade. The sequel is told in the following documents.

First, a statement by Kirk:

'On Friday, the 7th inst., after having visited H.H. Seyyid Majid and seen that he had not many hours to live, I was sent by Mr. Churchill to the house of Seyyid Barghash to ascertain if he were willing to come to the British Agency previous to the death of his brother and there confer on matters of importance. Barghash at once said that he would come and that he knew well that the future was in the hands of the British Agency who would do as they pleased. He followed me immediately, and in the Agency, in my presence and hearing, assured Mr. Churchill that, should he succeed in his candidature, the English would have a firm friend in him, that he would do all in his power to obtain what was asked of Seyyid Majid in Lord Clarendon's letter,<sup>1</sup> with the general tenour of which he was well acquainted, and that from him they would obtain this and even more.'<sup>2</sup>

Second, a cheerful report, dated the day after Majid's death, from Churchill to the Government of Bombay:

'I am happy to say that everything is quiet at Zanzibar. The decided attitude of this Agency with regard to the succession of Seyyid Barghash has closed the mouths of many who were inclined to reject his candidature . . . while the Prince was made to understand that he himself had no chance if Her Majesty's Government were against him. . . . It is likewise due to Sheikh Suliman to say that, had it not been for the timely notice that he gave me of the state of Seyyid Majid, I should not have been able to take the measures I took. As it is, a peaceful succession has been secured, and the new Sultan has pledged himself to do everything in his power to be agreeable to the British Government.'<sup>3</sup>

Third, a note, written two days later, from Churchill to Barghash:

'I did not think it would be my painful duty, so soon after your accession to the throne vacated by your brother, to remind

<sup>1</sup> Clarendon to C., 16. vi. 70, proposing a new treaty: K.P. Id, 30.

<sup>2</sup> Statement by K., 11. x. 70: Zanzibar Archives, *Outward*, 1870.

<sup>3</sup> C. to G. of B., 8. x. 70: *ibid.*



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you of certain pledges made by you to Her Majesty's agent before Seyyid Majid's death and amongst others of your readiness to accede to the wishes of Her Majesty's Government with regard to the suppression of the Slave Trade. I am grieved now to learn through Dr. Kirk, whom I sent to you to talk to you on this subject, that you repudiate your engagement on this as on several other points to which you equally pledged yourself.<sup>1</sup>

Fourth, Barghash's reply next day:

'Your friend has understood what you said, namely, that I pledged myself to you with reference to what you want. I do not recollect it; for, even if the matter referred to at the time were in my hands, I would not have promised you its fulfilment before calling together the great men of the state from all parts of the country and taking their advice, and was this possible when my brother Majid was still alive?'<sup>2</sup>

Fifth, Churchill's dispatch to Bombay, drafted immediately on the receipt of the foregoing note:

'His Excellency the Governor will judge from this how little the new Sultan can be relied upon and how desirable it would be to unseat him on the first pretext. Seyyid Turki, who is older than Barghash, is the only member of the Al-bu-Said family who could dispute the right of succession: but he should come here, if at all, with English influence to back him. I am now firmly convinced that nothing short of force will induce the present fanatical party in power to fulfil the concessions made by Seyyid Majid with reference to the Slave Trade, and I venture to submit that the sooner strong measures are adopted with them, the better.'<sup>3</sup>

It is clear from these documents what had happened. The cause of it is not so clear. Was Barghash, after all, a weak man? It presently appeared that he had chosen as his intimate advisers a group of six or seven members of the Mlawa faction whose support he had enlisted before Majid's death. These Mlawas represented at Zanzibar and in Oman the most ardent and aggressive school of Moslem thought. Votaries of the Abathi sect, claiming to interpret the Koran in their own inspired fashion, they preached the banishment of all things Euro-

<sup>1</sup> C. to Barghash, 10. x. 70: Zanzibar Archives, *Outward*, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> B. to C., 11. x. 70: *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> C. to G. of B., 11. x. 70: *ibid.*

pean from the Moslem world and its regeneration on the basis of their own exclusive doctrines. They were fierce, no doubt, these fanatics, but were they formidable? Was Barghash afraid, as Churchill seems to have thought, to break the promises he had doubtless made them before his accession? Or is it not possible that at heart he thought as they did? He was something of a fanatic himself. In 1859 he had betrayed a hatred of Europeans as deep as any Mlawa's. And was it really probable that his stay in Bombay, however much it may have taught him the hard facts of British power, had made him like the British better? And when he returned to his enforced seclusion in Zanzibar, may he not have chafed at his brother's submissiveness to the agents of the same ruling race? Was Zanzibar, in fact, a dependency of Bombay? If such indeed was Barghash's mind, it may well be that Churchill, with or without Kirk's approval, overplayed his hand. It was true that Barghash needed British favour, but was it wise not only to force that need upon him at that moment but to exact a pledge that he would pay the price of it? It was taking the guilt off the throne before he mounted it.

If Barghash acted impulsively, so did Churchill. He was, it must be remembered, near the end of his tether at that time and Barghash's sudden change of front must have been intensely disappointing and vexatious. But in better health and colder blood Churchill would surely have waited a day or two before submitting such a drastic policy to his superiors at Bombay. To decide forthwith on Barghash's deposition and to call in Turki as the instrument thereof would not merely alienate the great mass of Arab feeling at Zanzibar. Since Turki was now preparing his attack on Muscat, it might well undermine the Canning settlement; and it would be difficult, surely, having argued gravely and forcibly in 1861 that it was best for Oman and Arab East Africa to be separated, to contemplate their reunion in 1870 just because the new Sultan of Zanzibar, as soon as he was safely on his throne, had shown an unexpected and possibly a rather unscrupulous disregard for the exigencies of British policy.

Early in December 1870, just two months after Barghash's accession, Churchill was forced to choose between leaving his

post immediately or dying at it; and in that short period the relations between the consulate and the palace deteriorated almost to breaking-point. To begin with it was clear that Barghash for whatever reason was hand in glove with the Mlawas. Their leaders determined almost every point of the administration. They annulled the judicial decisions taken by Majid and his *kadis* wherever they departed from the Abathi version of the sacred law. At their prompting, so Churchill thought—but prompting may not have been needed—Barghash dropped all pretence of courtesy in his dealings with the British consul. He left his letters for several days unanswered; and when he did answer them, instead of the customary compliments he began, ‘This is our reply to Churchill, the British agent.’ On one occasion, in full assembly, he suggested that Churchill had forged a dispatch from the Foreign Office. On another, when the Governor of Bombay was mentioned, ‘he observed, in a towering voice, that he was not under his orders and did not know nor care for the man.’<sup>1</sup> More startling than these discourtesies was the sudden attack he made on the Indian population of the island, inspired partly, no doubt, by the Arab landlords’ traditional jealousy of the ‘banyans’’ domination in the business world, but also, perhaps, by the fact that these Indians were British subjects and under the British consul’s protection. On the excuse that Indians had stolen cloves from Arab plantations and induced their slave cultivators to sell them below the market-rate, the Sultan issued a proclamation to the effect that all Indians should be ejected from the plantations and prohibited from trading beyond the precincts of the town. Churchill promptly protested against ‘so flagrant a breach’ of the Treaty of 1839 which guaranteed the liberty of British subjects to enter, reside in, and trade with all parts of Seyyid Said’s ‘dominions’: and presumably the proclamation remained inoperative though it does not seem to have been formally annulled.<sup>2</sup> The next quarrel was over Suliman-bin-Ali, a son-in-law of Seyyid Said, who had loyally served Majid as *wazir*, had taken the field with

<sup>1</sup> C. to Wedderburn, 5. xii. 70: *P.P.* 1871. lxii. 924. C. to Sultan, 24. x. 70: *F.O.* 84. 1325.

<sup>2</sup> C. to Sultan, 19 and 24. x. 70; S. to C., 31. x. and 4. xi. 70; C. to S., 7. xi. and 4. xii. 70: *F.O.* 84. 1325; C. to Wedderburn, 17. xi. 70: *I.O.* shelf 5, vol. 49, 165. For the Treaty of 1839, see *East Africa and its Invaders*, 481–2.

him against Barghash in 1859, and had warmly fostered his friendly relations with the British consulate. Clearly his position and indeed his life might be in danger unless Barghash followed the same line of policy as Majid: and besides those pledges about the Slave Trade which Churchill exacted from Barghash on the eve of his accession, he had obtained, wisely or unwisely, a 'promise of fair treatment' for Suliman. Naturally enough, the new Sultan's *volte-face* alarmed this 'friend of England's', as Churchill called him.

'He very soon saw he was a marked man, and repeatedly urged me to take him into the service of the Agency and by this means protect him against the evil intentions of the Sultan; but I advised him to be patient. Little by little and one by one, he was divested of his functions as *wazir*, adviser, and secretary, but still I counselled him to fear nothing until I learned from a reliable source that every preparation had been made to arrest Suliman-bin-Ali and put him in irons in the Fort. On this I advised Suliman to write a letter to Seyyid Barghash informing him that it became more and more evident that their views on state affairs did not agree, and under the circumstances, as he had not touched Seyyid Barghash's pay, he declined serving His Highness and acquainted him with his having entered the service of the British Agency. . . . A tiger could not have been more furious than the Sultan when he found himself deprived of his victim. Messages, letters and protests were sent in quick succession, but I had determined to protect Suliman, and I quietly answered that according to our treaties with Zanzibar I had a right to take anyone I pleased of his subjects into my service. . . . When I ascertained that His Highness had caused the Agency to be surrounded by troops to arrest Suliman, even were he found in my own suite, and had gone so far as to send two of his men to the consulate itself to pounce upon his victim, I sent to remonstrate against this proceeding, and on his admitting the fact I sent him the peremptory message . . . that, if a hair of Suliman's head was touched, I should haul down the British flag and suspend my relations with him. . . . Suliman is now living in my house as a guest and he intends leaving for Bombay at the first opportunity.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sultan to C., 10 and 16. xi. 70; C. to S., 10 and 11. xi. 70; K.P. Ie, 16-17. C. to Wedderburn, 5. xii. 70; P.P. 1871. lxii. 924.

Meantime a still graver strain was being put on Barghash's relations with the representatives of the British Government by his attitude to that Government's primary objective at Zanzibar—the suppression of the Slave Trade. As will be described in Chapter VIII, Majid had been induced by Churchill's constant pressure to fulfil the obligations undertaken in the Treaty of 1845, had made sundry proclamations to that end, and had even been persuaded to contemplate, sourly enough, the negotiation of another treaty to limit still further the operation of the Trade. That Barghash should go at least as far as Majid in meeting British wishes in this matter was, as has been seen, the main purport of that interview and those assurances when Majid lay on his deathbed; and it was the prompt repudiation of his undertakings on that occasion which had so shocked and angered Churchill. And certainly Barghash made no concealment of his attitude. For three weeks Churchill, alone of all the foreign consuls, received no intimation from the new Sultan that he accepted the treaties and conventions signed by his two predecessors on the throne; and when Churchill at last insisted on it, Barghash admitted the binding nature of the treaties but declined to recognise any of the measures Majid had taken to enforce them. On being requested, finally, to begin the consideration of a new treaty, he curtly refused.

'You propose [he wrote] that we should send someone to you to discuss with you the terms of a new treaty; but it is unnecessary to discuss the one actually in existence, and the trouble resulting therefrom is quite enough for us and more than enough.'

This drew another vigorous reply from Churchill, so vigorous that, like the 'peremptory message' about Suliman, it had something like the flavour of an ultimatum.

'Your Highness is pleased to say that you have had enough and more than enough of the old treaties with Great Britain to think of making a new one. I understand from this that all negotiations with you for the improvement of the present state of affairs are useless. Is Her Majesty's Government to conclude from this statement that the presence of a British agent at Zanzibar can lead to no further good result?'

Churchill went on to remind Barghash that it was at Seyyid Said's desire that a British representative first came to Zanzibar

and that Said's throne, and Majid's likewise, had been upheld by British power.

'Your immediate predecessors never complained of the weight of England's friendship and yet their joint reigns extended over sixty years. You, Seyyid Barghash, have now been on the throne scarcely a month, and you complain of your subjects being spoliated by the British navy and say that the treaties signed by your father are more than you can bear. Shall I, then, convey this sentiment to Her Majesty's Government, and advise them under the circumstances to withdraw the Agency from Zanzibar, and leave your Highness to your own devices?'

That did not mean, Churchill explained, the frustration of British policy. Sooner or later, the Slave Trade between East Africa and Arabia and the Persian Gulf would be stopped. The British Government desired to achieve this object with as little injury as possible to Zanzibar and in friendly consultation with the Sultan. But these were 'minor considerations'. If necessary, the trade would be stopped 'independently of Zanzibar and her sovereign'.<sup>1</sup>

So the gloves were off—and yet Barghash remained recalcitrant. No wonder, perhaps, that Churchill, his illness gaining on him week by week, confessed that 'it was difficult to keep one's temper under daily trials of this nature': no wonder, perhaps, that he closed his last dispatch on a note of pessimism: 'Such, Sir, is the state of things at Zanzibar, and it remains for Her Majesty's Government to determine what course they purpose taking with a man who will do nothing except by being forced to it.'<sup>2</sup>

Churchill would have been even more disturbed if he had known of a curious incident which, as it happened, was to remain a secret for fifteen years. So fierce at this time was Barghash's resentment at British interference, so desperate his mood, that he called the representative of another European country to his aid. At the earlier crisis in his life he had turned to France; but this was the autumn of 1870 and he turned to the victors of Sedan. The exact truth of what passed between him and the

<sup>1</sup> C. to Sultan, 14, 17 and 26. x. 70; 10. xi. 70; S. to C., 24. x. and 6. xi. 70: P.P. 1871. lxii. 925-8.

<sup>2</sup> C. to Wedderburn, 5. xii. 70: *ibid.*, 924.

German consul, Theodor Schultz,<sup>1</sup> may never be known; but it seems that he invited or at least permitted him to draft on his behalf and for his signature a letter asking for German protection. When Kirk heard of this for the first time in 1885 and taxed the Sultan with it, Barghash at first denied all knowledge of it, but he finally admitted that Schultz had written some such letter, though without his authority. Kirk, nevertheless, thought it probable that the letter had been written with Barghash's connivance and duly signed by him as his own. 'I do not believe, however,' he wrote to the Foreign Office, 'that in asking help he meant what we understand by a protectorate, not understanding English in which the letter appears to have been written.' No answer, it seems, was returned, and in any case nothing could have come of it. The builders of the new German Empire were far too much preoccupied with events in Europe in the autumn of 1870, as Schultz's successor confessed in 1885, to consider for a moment a political adventure in a far-away field about which they knew so little and at that time cared so little as Zanzibar. The real importance of the incident lies in the sharp light it throws on the strength of Barghash's feelings.<sup>2</sup>

3

'Mr. Churchill having left in ill-health [wrote Kirk on December 12], I find myself once more in office, and at a time when the old traditions of Zanzibar are rudely disturbed by a prince who for his own ends has attached himself to an ultra-fanatic party. If they had their own way, we should all be banished the kingdom.'<sup>3</sup>

It was certainly a nasty situation, and it was fortunate for British interests that Kirk was there to deal with it. He was only 38; he had been only four years in Zanzibar; but it is clear from

<sup>1</sup> Schultz succeeded Witt in November 1868 and held office till June 1875.

<sup>2</sup> K. to Granville, 14. ii. 85: K.P. xii., pt. i, 7-9. Apart from Barghash's admission, Kirk was inclined to believe that the letter had been written because the date assigned to it, some time in 1870, was the only date at which such action on Barghash's part was conceivable. The letter might well have been written by Schultz in English because some of Barghash's advisers knew a little English but no German. The European text of the Hanseatic Treaty with Zanzibar was in English.

<sup>3</sup> K. to Vivian, 12. xii. 70: F.O. 84. 1325.

his first dispatches that he had acquired a firm grasp of the position and was coolly confident of mastering it. He pointed out, to begin with, that Barghash's connexion with the Mlawas was a source of weakness, not of strength: for either they would dominate Oman and in that case dominate Barghash too, or, as seemed more likely, they would lose their power in Oman and so become useless to Barghash. In either event Barghash would need British friendship: and Kirk was bent on making it as easy as possible for him to accept it. 'An open threat he resents, and his reckless obstinacy of temper at once rises to resist it; but he cannot withstand repeated hints coming to him from different quarters and given in an outwardly friendly manner.' Kirk, therefore, took advantage of Churchill's departure to break off the quarrel about the Slave Trade. He tacitly took for granted that Barghash would abide by the old Treaty and made no further attempt to obtain his preliminary acquiescence in negotiations for a new one. He would wait, he told him, till he received definite instructions from the British Government. Meantime he held in reserve a potent means of 'putting on the screw'. In the course of the inquiry he had made into the system of levying customs-dues in connexion with the controversy about French shipping,<sup>1</sup> he had discovered that in many other ways the stipulations of the Treaty of 1839 were not being strictly observed. Majid had lost 40,000 dollars a year by the settlement of the French question, and Barghash could be made to lose much more. 'By enforcing to the full the various provisions of the commercial Treaty, I can take away two-thirds of his income or 200,000 dollars yearly.' But of this Kirk said nothing for the moment to Barghash. He contented himself with publishing an abstract of British rights under the Treaty translated into Arabic and Gujerati.<sup>2</sup>

Barghash's reaction to the new man and the new methods was immediate. He, too, perhaps, had begun to realise that the Mlawas were not his safest friends and to regret the heat of his quarrel with Churchill. At any rate, within a few weeks, his relations with the British Agency were quite transformed. The conventional courtesies of intercourse were resumed. 'His High-

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 79-80, above.

<sup>2</sup> K. to Vivian, 12. xii. 70; K. to G. of B., 24. xii. 70: F.O. 84. 1325; K. to Granville, 20. ix. 71: F.O. 84. 1344.



ness', Kirk reported in December 1870, 'has shown himself peculiarly anxious to do nothing that could be taken as a slight by me.' He abandoned of his own accord the stand he had taken in the matter of the Indians on the plantations. He did not formally annul the provocative proclamations; but, so far from taking action on them, he handed over the charges and grievances of the Arab landlords for settlement to Kirk himself. Still more striking, he ceased to complain of British naval interference with Arab slavers; by officially recognising the proceedings of Kirk's court in dealing with captured slave-dhows he tacitly admitted that Majid's restrictions on the Trade were still in force; and he agreed without demur to such penalties as Kirk desired him to impose for violations of the law. On January 14, 1871, for example, he writes:

'We fully concur in your decision as to the dhow and its cargo. Regarding the people you have named, we have ordered them to be punished, and three of these are now in irons. Of the remaining two, when we find them, they also shall be put in irons. With respect to the agent of Ludha [Damji] we have given orders that he be dismissed from the service of the custom-house.'

Kirk, for his part, was careful to represent himself as acting on the Sultan's behalf. 'Your Highness will see that I am determined to support your authority and punish those who transgress your orders in Slave Trade matters.' Finally—and most remarkable of all—Barghash let Kirk know indirectly that he was willing to consider at least some further minor limitations on the Trade.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, in a very short time, the tension between the palace and the British Agency had been relieved and the old relationship of Majid's time restored. Naturally the Foreign Office was impressed and, as has been mentioned in the preceding chapter, commended Kirk's 'tact and discretion'.<sup>2</sup> Naturally, too, Kirk allowed himself a little private self-congratulation. 'The new Sultan,' he wrote to Hooker, 'who at the beginning of his reign was so unmanageable, has toned down under my hand and

<sup>1</sup> K. to G. of B., 24. xii. 70: F.O. 84. 1325; K. to Granville, 8. i. 71; K. to Sultan, 13. i. 71; Sultan to K., 14. i. 71; K. to G. of B., 30. i. 71: F.O. 84.

1344.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 60, above.

become much more tractable and pleasant to deal with in business matters than the last.' 'But for all that,' he shrewdly adds, 'I know he is so for his own ends.'<sup>1</sup>

Meantime the relations of Barghash with the Mlawas had developed precisely as Kirk had foretold. At the end of 1870 their chief protector, Azzan-bin-Kais, was still in possession of Muscat and regarded by his supporters among the Omani tribes as the rightful Imam. Early in the new year Barghash received four letters from Oman. Three of them were from leading Arabs of Azzan's party. The first spoke of making peace 'between you and our Lord, the Imam'. 'If you bind yourself to follow the Imam,' said the second, 'he will continue the kingdom to you; but, if you deny him, he will take it from you. Your wealth cannot protect you from him, nor your people save you.' 'Listen to the wise men of God', said the third, 'and take their advice in matters both religious and worldly.' The fourth letter was from Barghash's brother, Abdul Azziz-bin-Said. It was bluntly worded. 'Zanzibar is the fountain of money and we cannot get on without Zanzibar. . . . I have drawn on you for the sum of 5,000 dollars: pay it at once. . . . You have been my agent of old and are so still, nothing more: so do not make a big man of yourself. . . .' If further proof were needed of Barghash's change of front, it could be found in the fact that he actually sent these letters secretly to Kirk. In returning them Kirk briefly commented on the Imam's claim to dispose of Zanzibar and control its ruler's actions and on the probability that 'such pretensions will soon be followed by more substantial demands'. 'Should it ever be in my power to counsel you further on this or any other matter of State, I shall always deem it a privilege to hold myself at Your Highness's orders.'<sup>2</sup>

Hardly had this demonstration been given of what Mlawas predominance at Muscat implied for Barghash when, again as Kirk had expected, the balance of power in Oman once more shifted. In the course of 1870, Turki had returned from Bombay and taken the field against Azzan in co-operation with the

<sup>1</sup> Granville to K., 17. iii. 71: F.O. 84. 1344. K. to Hooker, 10. iii. 71: Kew, *English Letters, 1866-1900*.

<sup>2</sup> Letters from Oman to Sultan, Dec. 1870; K. to S., 27. i. 71; K. to G. of B., 30. i. 71: F.O. 84. 1344.

Wahabi and with the moral support of the Government of India. By the end of the year he was pressing Azzan hard, and early in 1871 he drove him from Muscat and declared himself sovereign of Oman. This restoration of the old branch of the Al-bu-Said family was welcomed by the majority of the fickle Omani, and it seemed probable that the strife and bloodshed which had continued almost without a break since Salim's murder of Thwain might now give place to a period of relative quiescence and stability. Barghash, as has been seen, had already begun to free himself from the Mlawas' domination. Now he had nothing to fear from them. But that did not mean that his independence was assured. Brother Turki was potentially as dangerous to him as brother Thwain had been to Majid. If he stood alone, if he had no external support, Zanzibar might soon be re-annexed to Oman. And where could he find that support except at the British Agency?

On Turki's assumption of power in Oman, Kirk took occasion to review Barghash's policy and character in a dispatch to the Government of Bombay. He paid him one unstinted tribute—for quickly and effectively setting straight the bad results of Majid's rule on the administration of justice. 'Corruption and bribery are, for the present at least, unknown among the *kadis*.' He had taken a strong line, too, with the 'Northern Arabs'. All 'blackmail' had been refused them, and their attempts to steal slaves at Zanzibar had been obstructed. Barghash had shown, moreover, an unusual grasp of finance. Ludha Damji had reported—and nobody knew better—that Barghash's expenditure had so far been kept within his income, 'no small thing for a Sultan to accomplish at the beginning.' As to his relations with the Agency, the sudden change at the end of 1870 had been maintained.

'So far from keeping at a distance, nothing is done by him without informing me or asking my advice, and justice is obtained for all British claims with a rapidity unknown in the latter days of Seyyid Majid. . . . With the French, American and German consulates I find that His Highness has greatly lost favour since he has treated this Agency with proper respect and as taking precedence in everything without question.'

Nevertheless, Kirk is by no means certain that the British Government should continue to support Barghash. Events had

## THE ACCESSION OF SEYYID BARGHASH

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shown him to be 'utterly devoid of principle or honour'. If he had dropped his insolent attitude to the Agency and become respectful, it was only because it suited his book. He had accepted the support and guidance of the Mlawas, and now he had thrown them over.

'In dealing with such a man we must be prepared to find him change his policy with the occasion. It would be impossible to trust his promises, nor have I any reason to think that he will without pressure be brought to yield what has been asked of him for the suppression of the Slave Trade. For this purpose it would probably be sufficient to enforce all the stipulations contained in the Commercial Treaty. It is, however, for Government to determine whether it may not be better at once to allow such a one as Seyyid Turki, now of Muscat, to take the kingdom. There is no one here to dispute the throne. The Zanzibar people themselves take no interest whatever in politics, and I doubt not that Seyyid Turki with a hundred men could easily make himself master of the place.'<sup>1</sup>

The suppression of the Slave Trade, it will be observed once more, is the dominant consideration. It weighs more than the advantages both to Oman and to Zanzibar which had been the main ground for their separation under the Canning Award and had been clearly recognised by Kirk himself in Majid's latter days. But was there any reason to suppose that Turki would be more yielding on that decisive issue than Barghash? Could any Arab prince, indeed, be expected to acquiesce in the suppression of the Trade 'without pressure'? Be that as it may, the Government of India, after consultation with the Foreign Office, decided that Barghash should retain his throne, and in August 1871 he was accorded formal recognition as Sultan of Zanzibar. Naturally enough, when Kirk interviewed him on that occasion, Barghash was in the best of spirits and 'spoke most freely and frankly on many questions of general and local interest'. Naturally enough, too, when Kirk slipped the Slave Trade into the conversation, he declared that 'he had of late been led to modify his views on the slave question' and even adumbrated a scheme for the further restriction of the Trade.<sup>2</sup> How far he realised his own impotence at this stage it is im-

<sup>1</sup> K. to G. of B., 9. iii. 71: I.O. shelf 5, vol. 49, 311.

<sup>2</sup> K. to Granville, 4. viii. 71: F.O. 84. 1344.

possible to say. Did he know in his heart that Churchill's outspoken threats would, at need, be made good? Was he already facing the inevitable and only hoping to stave it off as long as might be? That he was in fact powerless, that the ending of the Slave Trade was now assured, there can be no doubt. Nobody at Simla or in Whitehall questioned Kirk's cold assumption that his throne was at the disposal of the British Government and that whoever filled it would be obliged, somehow or other and before very long, to bow to Britain's inflexible determination to destroy the Slave Trade.

## VI

# THE EXPLORATION OF EAST AFRICA

(1856-1873)

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The British attack on the Arab Slave Trade at the beginning of Barghash's reign was more than the reopening of an old campaign. It was one result and for East Africans far the most important result of the awakening in Europe of quite a new interest in East Africa. Before 1856 there were not many parts of the world about which the western peoples knew less or cared less than they knew or cared about East Africa; but in that year it began to attract public attention, in Britain particularly, but also in other European countries and in America, as it had never done before. This new interest was not primarily an acquisitive interest. Economic possibilities, new sources of raw materials, new markets for European manufactures, were by no means forgotten. Schemes even of European colonisation came at one or two moments into the picture. But these were secondary or auxiliary factors. The predominant interest was scientific and humanitarian. The period from 1856 to 1873 was the great period of East African exploration. And largely because the foremost explorer was also the foremost enemy of the Arab Slave Trade, it was also the period in which the crusade against the Slave Trade in East Africa reached its climax.

### I

A few months before Said's death and Majid's accession, David Livingstone completed his historic march across Africa from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean. He had left Loanda on September 20, 1854, and, travelling on foot or ox-back and with only a few native companions, he reached Quilimane on May

20, 1856. It was and it remains the greatest feat in African exploration, and it startled and impressed European opinion as deeply as anything else that happened in that eventful period of the nineteenth century. Geographers everywhere were thrilled by this first European passage through the heart of Africa; and in Britain Livingstone was acclaimed on his return not only by universities and scientific societies but by press and public as the hero of the day. It was from the crest of this wave of popular enthusiasm that he made his first appeal to his fellow countrymen to do what they could to help the backward and suffering peoples of Central Africa.<sup>1</sup>

The response was quick and practical. In the course of 1857 Palmerston's Government obtained a grant of £5,000 from Parliament to equip an expedition for the exploration of the Zambesi with Livingstone in command. The official instructions for the Expedition were virtually those which Livingstone had drafted himself and accorded with the ideas he had conceived as to how the peoples of mid-Africa could actually be helped. The first thing, he believed, was to discover a short and reasonably easy route into the interior. Once that was available, European missionaries and traders would quickly penetrate to the central uplands of the continent. 'I go back to Africa', he said in his historic speech at Cambridge, 'to try to make an open path for commerce and Christianity.' And in thus stressing the economic factor, he was not merely expressing his trust in commerce as a civilising agency in general among backward peoples. he was also reviving the doctrine preached by the great emancipators of the preceding age—that the growth of 'legitimate' trade would kill the Slave Trade.

In the spring of 1858 Livingstone with his six assistants, including young Kirk as medical officer and botanist, began the ascent of the Zambesi, hoping to find that the river would prove navigable up to a point within easy reach of the highlands whence it flowed, so that somewhere in those highlands a 'central station' for missionaries and traders might be established. But by the end of 1858 this scheme was dead; for it was found that in a bend of the river above Tete the ascent by water was

<sup>1</sup> D. Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* (London, 1857), chaps. xiii-xxxii. W. G. Blaikie, *Personal Life of David Livingstone* (London, 1880), chaps. viii-xi. R. Coupland, *Kirk on the Zambesi*, chap. iii.

blocked by the Kebrabasa Rapids. This disappointment was offset, however, in 1859 by the exploration of the River Shiré and the Shiré highlands and the discovery of Lakes Shirwa and Nyasa. To Livingstone the climate of this upland country seemed even more suitable for European settlement than in fact it was; and it was at this point that he began in letters to his friends and dispatches to the Foreign Office to urge that a British 'colony' should be forthwith created. But he was, of course, too well acquainted by now with the conditions of Tropical Africa to contemplate colonial development of the North American and Australasian kind. 'The idea of a colony in Africa,' he wrote, 'as the term "colony" is usually understood, cannot be entertained. English races cannot compete in manual labour of any kind with the natives, but they can take a leading part in managing the land, improving the quality, creating the quantity and extending the varieties of the production of the soil; and by taking a lead too in trade and in all public matters the Englishman would be an unmixed advantage to everyone below and around him; for he would fill a place which is now practically vacant.'<sup>1</sup>

The colonisation of Nyasaland had to wait for the next generation, and the only immediate answer to Livingstone's plea was the creation of the United Universities' Mission to Central Africa and the establishment of its first station at Mogomo above the Shiré in 1861. Meantime, in 1860, Livingstone re-visited the Victoria Falls and Linyanti, and in 1861 he explored the western shore of Lake Nyasa by boat as far as 10° 20' south. From that point the fortunes of the Expedition rapidly declined. It appeared, in the first place, that its discoveries had coincided with, if they had not actually prompted, a recrudescence of the Slave Trade based on the ports of Mozambique. By 1862 its agents were devastating the Shiré Valley, and it was as a result of a brush with Ajawa slave hunters that Livingstone found himself for the only time in his life obliged in self-defence to fire on Africans. So shocking was the spectacle of murder, enslavement and desolation in a district which had seemed so peaceable and fertile when he first saw it that Livingstone suggested to Lord John Russell that, as the only effective means of

<sup>1</sup> *Kirk on the Zambesi*, chaps. iv and v. Blaikie, 279, and see also 220-1, 228, 236.



## THE EXPLORATION OF EAST AFRICA

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stopping the Trade, the Shiré country should be annexed to the British Crown. The second enemy was malaria. It had sorely tried the health of Livingstone himself and his companions from the beginning; one of the latter died of it in 1861 and another in 1863; and in 1862 it killed in rapid succession Bishop Mackenzie, the leader of the Mission, one of his young lieutenants, and, lastly, Mary Livingstone who had come out to the Zambesi to join her husband. An attempt to find an alternative waterway to Lake Nyasa by the River Rovuma in the autumn of 1862 was frustrated by rocks and rapids about a hundred miles from its mouth. In 1863 Russell ordered the Expedition to return. The Universities' Mission was also withdrawn, and under Bishop Tozer established itself at Zanzibar.<sup>1</sup>

### 2

At about the same time as the Zambesi Expedition was exploring Nyasaland, two other expeditions were making even more important additions to the map of Africa in the countries now known as Tanganyika and Uganda.<sup>2</sup>

The first was led by Captain Richard F. Burton of the Indian Army who had boldly taken part, disguised as an Arab, in the pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina in 1854. In 1855 he had made his way to Harar in Southern Abyssinia and, accompanied by Lieutenants John H. Speke and Stroyan, also of the Indian Army, had tried to penetrate Somaliland from the neighbourhood of Berbera but had been thwarted by the hostility of the Somali. In an attack on their camp Stroyan had been killed and both Burton and Speke wounded. In 1856 Burton proposed an expedition 'primarily for the purpose of ascertaining the limits of the Sea of Ujiji'—which was, of course, well known to Arab traders but had not yet been seen by a European nor received

<sup>1</sup> *Kirk on the Zambesi*, chaps. vi and vii. Annexation, *ibid.*, 270.

<sup>2</sup> The Burton-Speke and Speke-Grant Expeditions are described in outline in J. N. L. Baker's *History of Geographical Discovery and Exploration* (2nd ed. London, 1937), chap. xi, and in more detail in Sir H. Johnston's *The Nile Quest* (London, 1903), chaps. xi-xiii. For the full story see R. F. Burton, *The Lake Regions of Central Africa* (London, 1860), and *Zanzibar* (London, 1872); J. H. Speke, *What Led to the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (London, 1864); and *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (London, 1863); J. A. Grant, *A Walk Across Africa* (London, 1864); and contemporary articles and records in the *Journal* and *Proceedings* of the R.G.S.

its name of Lake Tanganyika—‘and secondarily to determine the exportable produce of the interior and the ethnography of its tribes’. The Royal Geographical Society accepted the proposal and contributed towards its cost. Burton was instructed, as ‘the great object of the expedition’, to travel inland from the coast to ‘the reputed Lake Nyasa’ (which was supposed at that date to be one long lake including the ‘Sea of Ujiji’) and thence explore the traditional ‘Mountains of the Moon’ where the source of the Nile would probably be found.<sup>1</sup>

Burton, accompanied again by Speke, arrived at Zanzibar at the end of 1856, three months after Seyyid Said’s death. They were welcomed by Consul Hamerton, and obtained permission for their expedition and the requisite letters of introduction to the Arabs of the interior from Seyyid Majid. In February 1857, while waiting for the rainy season to pass, they paid a brief visit to Kimweri, the king of the Shambaa at his capital, Vuga, in the Usambara Mountains.<sup>2</sup> In June they set out along the main Arab trade route, and in November reached the Arab ‘colony’ at Tabora where they were treated in the friendliest fashion by the Arab traders.<sup>3</sup> Since for some time past these traders had been leading their caravans up to and beyond the three Great Lakes, Burton and Speke soon learned from them that the traditional inland sea was not a single vast stretch of water. In February 1858 they reached Ujiji and spent the next two months in exploring the northern part of Lake Tanganyika in an Arab dhow. In June they were back at Tabora. Both explorers had suffered repeatedly from malaria and Burton was now obliged to lie up for a time. Pending his recovery Speke set off northwards by himself, and in August he saw—rather dimly, for fever had affected his eyes—the huge expanse of water which he christened Lake Victoria Nyanza.<sup>4</sup> He rightly guessed that he had lighted on the main headwaters of the Nile, but his duty to Burton prevented him probing farther into the unknown

<sup>1</sup> *J.R.G.S.*, xxix, 5.

<sup>2</sup> For Krapf’s earlier contact with Kimweri, see *East Africa and its Invaders*, chap. xiii.

<sup>3</sup> The explorers called the settlement Kaze and the surrounding district Unyanyembe. Tabora is the better-known name today. It is a centre of administration and a junction on the railway.

<sup>4</sup> The natives called it ‘Nyanza’, a Bantu word, of which ‘Nyasa’ is another form, meaning a spread of water.

north. He returned to Tabora, whence both explorers started for the coast in September. In March 1859 they were back at Zanzibar.

The second expedition was the natural sequel to the first. On his return to England in 1859 Speke was promptly commissioned by the Royal Geographical Society to return to Lake Victoria and make good his belief that he had found the source of the Nile. To finance the venture £2,500 was obtained by public subscription—the British Government contributed and the Government of India made a gift of arms and ammunition—and in October 1860 Speke was again ascending the old route to Tabora, in company this time with another fellow-officer, A. J. Grant. At Tabora he was held up for many months. The difficulty of obtaining porters once they had left the coast and of preventing the desertion of those they did obtain had been the first expedition's greatest trouble. It was now enhanced by the unsettled state of Unyamwezi and the neighbouring districts. The Arabs of Tabora were engaged in a desultory war with a native chief—in which, as has been seen, Speke unsuccessfully attempted the role of mediator—while northwards and westwards the Fiti, a militant tribe from the south, akin to the Zulu, were raiding and laying waste the countryside. For months Speke could make little progress towards Lake Victoria. Porters seemed unprocurable. His path was blocked by the extortionate demands of the petty chiefs for *hongo*, the compulsory gift required from travellers for permission to pass through the recipient's territory. His precious store of trade-goods, the only currency for paying *hongo* or buying food, was rifled. It was not till July 1861 that at long last and in serious distress from an obscure and obstinate chest-disease Speke, leaving Grant behind in charge of the remaining stores, finally took the road for the north. Thenceforward his progress, if slow, was reasonably steady. In September Grant rejoined him and in October they reached Usui, a district lying south-west of the Lake, where the cupidity of the principal chief, Suwarora, was fortunately equalled by his friendly interest in the apparition of two white men. Fortunately, too, Suwarora's overlord, Rumanika, king of Karagwe, the next country to the north, was similarly interested, smoothed the explorers' path to his capital, and courteously entertained them while he sent word of their arrival to the

still greater chief, Mtesa, who had recently succeeded Suna as the king of Uganda. On January 10, 1862, once more leaving Grant behind to nurse an ulcerated leg, Speke bade farewell to Rumanika, and on the 16th he crossed the frontier of Uganda. Hitherto his route had lain a long way westward of the Lake, but now it brought him to its north-west shore, following which he arrived at Mtesa's capital, Banda, near Kampala, on February 19. Grant caught him up in May, but they had to wait another two months before their wayward host would allow them to continue their journey. At last, however, on July 8 they got away, and on July 28 Speke stood at the spot where the waters of Victoria Nyanza, a little below their exit from the Lake, break downwards in a leap of fifteen feet—Speke named it the 'Ripon Falls'—to begin their long journey to the Mediterranean. The main source of the Nile was thus finally determined, but Speke did not trace its southward course. He cut inland to Unyoro and at the court of its king, Kamrasi, jealous rival of Mtesa, between the Nile and the Kafu River, the explorers were again detained for two whole months. Early in November they were allowed to go and, following the Kafu to its junction with the Nile, continued southwards, sometimes travelling downstream in canoes, sometimes striking inland, till they reached Faloro.

Before Speke left England it had been arranged that if, as seemed probable, the Nile issued from Lake Victoria, he should follow it southwards to the neighbourhood of Gondokoro where it was arranged that he should be met by John Petherick, an adventurous Welsh engineer, who, after a period of service in Mahomet Ali's Egyptian Government, was engaged in ivory-trading on the White Nile. Samuel Baker also, son of a wealthy London merchant, who had been tempted at this time to enter the novel and exciting field of African exploration, had independently decided to pursue the White Nile southwards in the hope of meeting Speke.

It was at Faloro that the travellers first got into touch with these approaches from the north. Petherick, hearing no news of the expedition as the years went by, had gone off trading away from the Nile, but he had arranged for a body of 200 Sudanese soldiers to wait at Faloro. They were not, as it happened, very helpful; for their commander was almost as reluctant as the kings

in the south to allow Speke and Grant to proceed any further. But this last check was finally surmounted, and on February 15, 1863, two years and four months since leaving Zanzibar, they arrived at Gondokoro. Petherick turned up a few days later, but Baker was already there. The rest of the journey was easy. Early in 1863 Speke was back in England. In the course of a few years he had proved himself one of the greatest and noblest of African explorers. He was only 37 when, in 1864, he accidentally shot himself.

### 3

So far the great discoveries in East Africa had been made by Englishmen and Scotsmen, but in this same eventful period the task of exploration was taken up, or rather resumed, by Germans. In 1844 J. H. Krapf in the service of the Church Missionary Society established a mission station at Rabai near Mombasa where he was presently joined by his friend and colleague, J. Rebmann. They made several journeys inland, Rebmann into the Chagga country, Krapf into Usambara and through the Nyika to the upper reaches of the Tana River. In 1848 Rebmann saw Mount Kilimanjaro and in 1849 Krapf saw Mount Kenya.<sup>1</sup> These were missionary reconnaissances for the planting of new stations in the interior, but young Albrecht Roscher's enterprise was purely scientific or exploratory. A native of Hamburg, he had obtained his doctorate by a thesis on Ptolemy and the trade-routes of Central Africa, and in 1858, when he was only 22, he was commissioned by Ludwig, the exiled king of Bavaria, to attack the mystery of the 'inland sea'. In the autumn of that year Rigby reported his arrival at Zanzibar with a recommendation from Lord Clarendon at the Foreign Office;<sup>2</sup> and in 1859 he was busy exploring on foot the coast southwards of Bagamoyo and the River Rufiji. In August 1859, having failed to obtain porters of his own at Zanzibar, he joined an Arab caravan going inland from Kilwa, and in October he reached the east shore of Lake Nyasa a few weeks after Livingstone had reached its southern end. The leader of the caravan had robbed and neglected him and he was exhausted

<sup>1</sup> See *East Africa and its Invaders*, chap. xiii, and for details, J. H. Krapf, *Travels in East Africa* (London, 1860).

<sup>2</sup> F.O. 54. 17. Russell, 76.

with fever and bad food; but Makaua, the Chief at Nusewa on the Lake, treated him so kindly and fed him so well that he was soon restored to health and exploring the lakeside country. At the end of January 1860 Rigby received a letter from him, and in ignorance of Livingstone's movements he reported home that this 'enterprising young German' was the first white man to reach Lake Nyasa. The tribes of the neighbourhood, he added, are 'a quiet good-tempered race and friendly to white men'.<sup>1</sup>

Roscher, meantime, had made up his mind to go north, perhaps to try for the prize which Speke, as it happened, had won in 1858; and early in 1860, leaving most of his baggage in the Chief's charge, he started from Nusewa with the two servants he had brought from Zanzibar and only a couple of porters. On March 20, the third day out, at the village of Kisungune he was murdered, for no other reason apparently than greed for his scanty possessions. One of the two servants escaped to Nusewa and reported what had happened: whereupon Makaua dispatched him with an escort to the Chief or 'Sultan' of the district in which the murder had been committed. The latter promptly proceeded to Kisungune with fifty followers, examined into the crime, and arrested four men whom, since he knew that Roscher had been travelling under the protection of Seyyid Majid, he sent under guard to Zanzibar together with Roscher's servant and goods. Two of them, whose guilt had been established by the servant's evidence, were publicly executed on August 23, 1860.<sup>2</sup>

Speke and Grant were at Zanzibar at that time preparing for their expedition to Uganda; and another recent arrival in East Africa was Baron Carl Claus von der Decken who had come out intending to join Roscher in exploring Lake Nyasa.<sup>3</sup> Von der Decken was born in 1833 of an old Hanoverian family. His father had fought in the English Legion at Waterloo and had

<sup>1</sup> Russell, 76, 81, 222-3. Rigby to Wood, 1. v. 60: F.O. 54. 17. Livingstone's prior discovery of Lake Nyasa: *Kirk on the Zambesi*, 156; Russell, 224.

<sup>2</sup> Russell, 222-3. Roscher's papers were never recovered, and all that is known of his journey and death may be found in Kersten (as cited in the next footnote), i. 178-80. A. J. Grant witnessed the execution and gives a grim account of it: *A Walk Across Africa*, 17-19.

<sup>3</sup> A full account of von der Decken's travels is given in the first two volumes of Otto Kersten's *Von der Decken's Reisen in Ost-Afrika* (Leipzig and Heidelberg, 1869). Sir Claud Hollis' pamphlet, *Von der Decken* (Zanzibar), is a useful summary.

served in the household of three successive kings of England and Hanover. He himself joined the Hanoverian army at an early age, but he was more scientist and traveller than soldier, and he resigned his commission in order to reinforce Roscher with men and money. He was met at Zanzibar, as has been seen, by the news of Roscher's murder, and he decided to make without delay for the scene of the crime in the hope of recovering the dead man's journal and notes. Armed with a letter of commendation from Lord John Russell, he was soon on friendly terms with Rigby, and backed by him and Witt, who had just hoisted his flag as Hanseatic consul, he obtained the usual 'passport' from Seyyid Majid. At the end of September he went to Kilwa to organise his expedition, but so obstructive were the local Arabs that two months passed before the start was made; and he had scarcely left the coast before he found himself in difficulties. His porters were almost unmanageable: they threw away their loads or disappeared with them into the 'bush'. The 'Baluchis' he had obtained from Majid's army were thoroughly insubordinate. The villagers refused to sell him fresh food. His Austrian servant took ill and nearly died. His own life was threatened. Finally, at Mesuli, some 160 miles from Kilwa, he realised that further progress was impossible. At the beginning of 1861 he was back at Zanzibar.<sup>1</sup>

It can have been no accident that von der Decken's troubles on the Kilwa Lake Nyasa trade route were so much greater than those of Burton, Speke and Grant on the Bagamoyo-Tabora trade-route; and it seems clear that the Arabs and Swahili of Kilwa did their best to obstruct his expedition. Their motive seems equally clear. If more ivory came down to Bagamoyo from the area of Lake Tanganyika, more slaves came down to Kilwa from the area of Lake Nyasa. Kilwa, indeed, was the chief slave port on the coast, and it was natural that there especially and along the inland track the Arabs should try to discourage the intrusion of inquisitive Europeans. Von der Decken himself believed that Majid had issued secret orders to the Kilwa Arabs to prevent his getting to Lake Nyasa;<sup>2</sup> and for

<sup>1</sup> Kersten, i. 140-60. Russell, 87, 91, 225.

<sup>2</sup> If this was so, Majid may have been prompted, partly at any rate, by anxiety as to what might happen to von der Decken if he were to reach the scene of Roscher's murder and attempt some act of retribution on his own account. Hollis, *op. cit.*, 3.

that reason among others he abandoned his designs on the Lake in favour of an attempt to confirm beyond dispute the missionaries' assertions that Mounts Kenya and Kilimanjaro were 'snow-mountains'. To this plan Majid clearly had no objection, for he had the explorer's party conveyed to Mombasa in a brig from his own fleet. After visiting Rabai, where he consulted Rebmann as to his route, von der Decken took a more or less direct course through Taita and towards the end of June he arrived at the foot of Kilimanjaro, where he was cautiously but not unamiably welcomed by Mandara, the intelligent one-eyed paramount chief of Chagga. He explored the outskirts of the mountain, and attempted an ascent of it, but failed to get higher than 8,000 feet. He returned through Usambara to Vanga and up the coast to Mombasa. On November 8, 1861, he was back at Zanzibar.<sup>1</sup>

For the next nine months von der Decken remained in Zanzibar and its neighbourhood waiting for Dr. Otto Kersten, another young German scientist who was coming out to assist in further exploration. On his arrival a second attack was made on Kilimanjaro; and this time the mountain was climbed up to 14,000 of its 19,000 feet. Von der Decken had intended to continue his march north-west and make his way to Lake Victoria, but, finding the Masai stubbornly opposed to his advance, he wisely withdrew. He had left Zanzibar on August 18, and got back there on December 30.

There remained the problem of Mount Kenya; and, since von der Decken had come to the conclusion that the easiest way to approach the mountain was to travel up one of the rivers that flowed from its slopes to the coast, he ordered a low-draught steamer to be sent out from Europe. In the first half of 1863 he visited the Comoro Isles, Madagascar, the Seychelles, Réunion and Mauritius, and in the autumn he returned to Europe where he was warmly received at all the chief capitals and nowhere more warmly than in London. At the end of 1864 he was again at Zanzibar, and after exploring the mouths of the Tana, Ozi and Tula Rivers, he decided at the end of July 1865 to ascend

<sup>1</sup> On this expedition von der Decken took with him Richard Thornton, a geologist, who served in the Zambesi Expedition but was dismissed by Livingstone in 1859. He rejoined the Expedition in 1862, and Kirk describes in his diary the interesting account he then gave of Kilimanjaro. He died of dysentery in 1863. *Kirk on the Zambesi*, 148, 158, 236-7, 251.



the Juba. On August 15 the expedition left Jumbo, and a month later reached Bardera, a fair-sized Somali town about 160 miles from the sea. Twenty miles further upstream the paddleboat was wrecked in the rapids, and the party, camping on shore, prepared to continue the journey on foot. On this expedition, which was more elaborately organised than the earlier ones, von der Decken was accompanied by nine Europeans—a lieutenant and an engineer of the Austrian navy, a doctor, an artist, a forester, two mechanics, a carpenter, and a cook. One of the mechanics was drowned off the mouth of the Juba, and there were only eight white men camped with their native servants above Bardera when on September 28 von der Decken, taking with him the doctor, his headman Mabruki, who had served with Speke, and a native crew, set off down to the town in the gig to buy food. On October 1 the camp was suddenly attacked by a band of Somali. The naval engineer, Nikolaus Kantor, the artist, Eduard Trenn, and several of the servants were killed; and the whole party might have suffered the same fate if the forester, Richard Brenner, had not had his gun handy. He shot down several of the Somali, and the rest decamped. To stay where they were was clearly hazardous, and the survivors of the party, five Europeans and eight natives, set off downstream in the one remaining boat. They reached Bardera in the middle of the night. The town lay bathed in moonlight. There was no sound or movement. Von der Decken's gig was nowhere to be seen along the river bank. Fearing the worst had happened, the party went on down to the coast and thence on foot to Kisumu. An Arab dhow took them to Lamu where they found a ship which had been chartered to bring stores for the expedition to the Juba. They reached Zanzibar on October 24, and on the 29th left again for Lamu carrying the Sultan's orders to the Governor to put his 'Baluchi' garrison at their disposal. The Governor, however, would only provide four men, and those four were forbidden to go farther north than Tula Island. On November 15 Mabruki arrived at Lamu from Barawa whither he and the native crew had escaped from Bardera. He reported that von der Decken and the doctor, Hermann Linck, had been speared at Bardera on or about October 1. Meantime, H.M.S. *Vigilant* had been sent to Barawa to get news of von der Decken. The fugitive crew, who were found there and brought back to

Zanzibar, confirmed Mabruki's story. Clearly nothing could be done without a military force. So the five surviving white men left Zanzibar in January 1866 for home.<sup>1</sup>

Von der Decken's mother, Princess Adelheid of Pless, believing that her son might possibly be still alive, commissioned Theodor Kinzelbach, who had taken part in African exploration in the Western and Eastern Sudan, and Brenner to return to the Juba and make further inquiries. Kinzelbach tried to reach Bardera overland from Mogadishu, but he died at Geledi in January 1868. Brenner, also making through the Somali and Galla country between Malindi and Mogadishu, got as far as Sorori, about one hundred miles up the Juba, in 1867-8, but could not reach Bardera. In the course of his journey Brenner visited the town of Witu, some ten miles north of the River Tana where it flows into Formosa Bay. It was the 'capital' of Ahmed Fumo Luti, known as Simba or 'Lion', an adventurous chief of the Bajun, the people of mixed race who inhabited the coast and islands in that area. On succeeding to his father's chiefdom in Pate Island in 1856, Simba migrated to the mainland and built up a new Sultanate of Witu. Like the other local rulers of the coast, he nominally accepted the overlordship of Zanzibar; but that was a tie which his personal ambition and his family's traditional feud with the Arabs of Oman made him ready enough to break; and on the occasion of Brenner's visit—whether on his own initiative or on Brenner's there is no evidence to determine—he made a proposal which, like Barghash's proposal to Consul Schultz in 1870, was to lie hidden in German archives till 1885. In that year the German Government, for reasons that will appear in due course, announced that 'in 1867 Sultan Simba requested the Prussian Government through the African traveller, Richard Brenner, to conclude a Treaty of Friendship and to take him under its protection'.<sup>2</sup>

The task of telling the story of von der Decken's travels was entrusted to Kersten who had been prevented by illness from joining the last ill-fated expedition. From this detailed narrative, from the long passages it contains from his own journals, and from the accounts of those who met him, von der Decken

<sup>1</sup> Kersten, ii. 343.

<sup>2</sup> Bismarck to Münster, 2. vi. 85, communicated to Granville, 6. vi. 85: K.P. XII, pt. i, 65-6.

emerges as an attractive, single-minded, courageous personality. He ill deserved an end so brutal; for, like the British explorers mentioned in this chapter, he always avoided bloodshed in his dealings with Africans, however obstructive or menacing they might be. To quote one who knows East Africa well: 'He invariably tried to win through by tact, by argument and by kindness, and when he found that these failed, he was brave enough to admit himself beaten and to turn back rather than to endeavour to obtain by force of arms what he could not gain by negotiation. He never forgot that others would pass along the path that he had trod, and that those who followed after him would reap what he had sown.'<sup>1</sup>

On von der Decken's return to Zanzibar from his second assault on Kilimanjaro he fell in with Charles New, a missionary from the Methodist station at Ribe, near Mombasa, and inspired him with his ambition to climb yet higher up the mountain, up to the fringe, if possible, of its great dome of snow. Years passed before New was able to attempt it, but in July 1871 he set out from Ribe with only fifteen porters and only £32 in goods and cash, and early in August he arrived at Mandara's town, Moshi, by way of Taveta. Though his demeanour and his rolling eye were at times alarming, Mandara took a friendly interest in New's 'impossible' venture, and, having with the greatest difficulty persuaded a few natives to face with him the fog and bitter cold and evil spirits of the unknown heights, New succeeded at a second attempt in reaching the snow line on August 26. In October he got back to Ribe.<sup>2</sup>

### 4

Six months after von der Decken's death, Livingstone once more struck inland from the East African coast. His return to England at the close of the Zambesi Expedition in 1864 had

<sup>1</sup> Hollis, 15.

<sup>2</sup> C. New, *Life, Wanderings and Labours in Eastern Africa* (London, 1873), chaps. xx and xxi. The account of New's ascent, which is much fuller than that of von der Decken's, is well worth reading, especially the description of the sufferings, physical and mental, of his native companions and their astonishment at the 'white stone' and the way it melted before they got their lumps of it home.

been another great public event. Again he was 'lionised' in London and acclaimed wherever he went about the country. His *Narrative of an Expedition to the Zambesi* was as eagerly read as the earlier *Missionary Travels*. He had, in fact, captured the popular imagination to a degree which none other of the great Victorians surpassed; and, if he had chosen at that time to eschew the loneliness and hardship of further exploration and settle down to such a home life as he never knew, he would still have been an historic figure. But for Livingstone such a choice was impossible. He was only fifty-one; and as soon as his book was finished, he was burning to be back in Africa. His friends were of the same mind. Ministers and geographers were equally hungry for more discoveries. In 1865, accordingly, he was commissioned by the Royal Geographical Society to make another attack on the area of the Great Lakes. Government supported the proposal, and equipped him with official authority to deal with native chiefs in all the area between the frontier of Portuguese East Africa and those of Abyssinia and Egypt. The objective was more purely scientific than that of the Zambesi Expedition, but, intense as was Livingstone's zest for exploration, he always regarded it as a means of 'opening Africa to civilising influences'. And in the preface of his new book he made it clear that the purpose of his next undertaking was to renew the old fight with the Slave Trade as well as the old quest for the sources of the Congo and the Nile. 'I propose to go inland, north of the territory which the Portuguese in Europe claim, and endeavour to commence that system on the east which has been so eminently successful on the west coast: a system combining the repressive efforts of Her Majesty's cruisers with lawful trade and Christian missions. . . . I hope to ascend the Rovuma or some other river north of Cape Delgado, and in addition to my other work shall strive, by passing along the northern end of Lake Nyasa and round the southern end of Lake Tanganyika, to ascertain the watershed of that part of Africa.'<sup>1</sup>

Livingstone went out to East Africa by way of Bombay, where he found the Governor, Sir Bartle Frere, keenly interested in the campaign against the Slave Trade and obtained from him a strong recommendation to Seyyid Majid. At the end of January

<sup>1</sup> *Narrative of an Expedition to the Zambesi and its Tributaries* (London, 1865), vi.

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1866 he arrived at Zanzibar, and on April 6 he started from Mikindani near the mouth of the Rovuma on his last long journey.<sup>1</sup>

He had engaged ten porters from Johanna and twenty local men at Mikindani, and he had brought over from Bombay nine freed slaves from the Nassick School and thirteen marine sepoy furnished by the Bombay Government. He also had with him two natives from the Shupanga district who had served on the Zambesi Expedition, and two Yao who had been rescued from the slave-gang broken up by Bishop Mackenzie and himself in 1861.<sup>2</sup> It soon proved an ill-chosen company. The Johanna men were lazy and thievish, the sepoy disobedient and brutal to the baggage animals. All Livingstone's skill in handling natives was of no avail. After a few weeks the Mikindani porters deserted. A little later Livingstone dismissed the sepoy. With his personnel thus seriously reduced, he reached in August the east shore of Lake Nyasa which he had expected to cross in one of the dhows built by the Arabs to facilitate the extension of the Slave Trade. But his doings in the Shiré Highlands four years earlier had not been forgotten, and the Arab 'slavers' sedulously avoided him. He was obliged, therefore, to make his way to the southern end of the Lake on foot; and no sooner had he rounded it than he was confronted with a new difficulty. Smoking villages, ravaged crops, bands of fugitives showed that the country was suffering again, as he had seen it suffering when he first explored the Lake in 1861, from Fiti raids. It was too much for the disgruntled Johanna men. They bolted for the coast. One of the two Yao also decamped at this time, finding himself unexpectedly in the neighbourhood of the village from which he had been carried off to slavery years before. Soon after, Livingstone suffered a far graver loss. An absconding porter disappeared with a load containing his little medicine chest. It proved in the long run his death blow. As he pushed on through what is now Northern Rhodesia he was constantly ill with dysentery and malaria, aggravated by the advent of the rainy season and by lack of

<sup>1</sup> Livingstone's own account of his wanderings from 1866 to 1873 is in his *Last Journals* (London, 1874). They will form the subject of the author's *Livingstone's Last Journey*, now in preparation.

<sup>2</sup> See *Kirk on the Zambesi*, 195-6.

good and sufficient food. With quinine and other simple drugs he could have kept these enemies at bay. Now they fastened on him, and when he reached the southern end of Lake Tanganyika in April 1867 he collapsed and for a month lay dangerously ill.

Meantime the world he had left so far behind him was shocked by a seemingly genuine report of his death. To explain their re-appearance on the coast without their master and to obtain the wages due to them, the renegade Johanna men had concocted a tale of an attack on their caravan by Fiti and Livingstone's death at their hands. It was so circumstantial that most people both at Zanzibar and in England believed it. There were doubters, however—among them Sir Roderick Murchison, President of the Royal Geographical Society, and Edward D. Young who had shared in the last two years of the Zambesi Expedition. A party of four, with Young in command, was quickly organised to proceed to the district on the south-west side of Lake Nyasa where the tragedy was alleged to have occurred and find out the truth. Young left England in June 1867, and reached the Lake by the old route up the Shiré in September. He soon came upon natives who had seen Livingstone and his party marching steadily northwards several days after the Johanna men had left him. In January 1868 he was back with the good news in England, and in the same month letters from Livingstone, written in the previous February and describing the departure of the Johanna men, at last reached Zanzibar.<sup>1</sup>

By that time Livingstone was still farther removed from contact with the outer world. Before leaving Zanzibar he had declared his intention of establishing a kind of depot at Ujiji and had commissioned an Indian firm to send up stocks of provisions to await him there. In these letters to Zanzibar, likewise, he asked for more stores and for the drugs he so desperately needed to be sent to the same place. But, on recovering from his illness at the lakeside, instead of pushing on to Ujiji, he turned west to clear up the reports he had heard of Lake Mweru. In his enfeebled condition and with only a few Nassick 'boys', the two Shupanga men, and the one Yao—these last three wholly trustworthy—he could have made little progress if he had not fallen

<sup>1</sup> E. D. Young, *The Search After Livingstone* (London, 1868).

in with Arab slave-traders, the famous 'Tipu Tib' among them, who, so far from showing the hostility and aloofness of their colleagues on Lake Nyasa, treated Livingstone in the friendliest manner and gave him all the help he needed. But this association with the Arabs involved him in long and tedious delays. The discovery of Lakes Mweru and Bangweolo need not have taken the best part of two years: yet it was not till March 1869 that Livingstone, emaciated and exhausted—he had had an attack of pneumonia besides frequent recurrence of malaria and dysentery—arrived at Ujiji.

To his bitter disappointment he found only a remnant of the goods he had ordered awaiting him. Most of them had been stolen. There was no medicine; nor were there any letters or papers, and he had had no news at all from Zanzibar or England for nearly three years. The goods, it appears, had been dispatched but some of them had got no farther than Tabora. As to the rest, the pilfering which Livingstone himself and other European explorers were unable to prevent in their own caravans had proved an easier business in Arab or Swahili caravans whose leaders were not also the owners of the bales; and if the report of Livingstone's death had reached Ujiji, the temptation to further theft must have been strong. As to letters and papers, Livingstone found the Arab 'slavers' at Ujiji—'the vilest of the vile', he called them—not unnaturally anxious to prevent his communicating their doings to Zanzibar. The road, moreover, between Ujiji and Tabora was not as safe at this time as it once had been. Between 1860 and 1865 it was blocked, as has been seen, by the war between the Arabs of Tabora and Manwa Sera. In 1869 when Livingstone reached Ujiji, it was blocked again by fighting with Fiti raiders. In 1871 Stanley found it once more obstructed by the war with Mirambo.<sup>1</sup> But Livingstone succeeded in getting through one letter of the forty or so he wrote—a letter to Kirk asking for porters and more goods. It reached him in October 1869 when he was grappling with the onset of the cholera epidemic which devastated East Africa in that year and the next. The fear of it brought transport almost to a standstill, but Kirk succeeded in despatching fifteen porters with goods and drugs up the inland track. Five of them were caught by the cholera and died. The other ten reached Ujiji in

<sup>1</sup> See chap. XII below. Livingstone, *Last Journals*, ii. 6.

December 1870. They found that Livingstone had gone west, and seven of them crossed the Lake and came on him at Bambarre in Manyema.

Refreshed by his rest at Ujiji, Livingstone had started off in the previous July to discover whether the waters flowing north from the area of Lake Mweru were feeders of the Congo or more southerly sources of the Nile than Lake Victoria. He expected this expedition to take him four or five months. It took him more than two years. The main reason was the weakening of his own vitality. Still without drugs, he was soon again a prey to fever. At one time he suffered from a protracted bout of 'choleraic purging', possibly due to infection from the coast: at another he was tortured and crippled for months with ulcers on his feet. Progress was made difficult, moreover, by the disturbed condition of the countryside. Just at this time, as it happened, the Arab traders were beginning to penetrate Manyema, and, as they found that ivory was plentiful and cheap, something like a 'rush' was being made from Ujiji to exploit the new field. The Arabs were armed and freely used their guns. It was worse than a Fiti visitation, and the European's way was barred by the suspicious and sometimes dangerous attitude of the Asiatics' victims. The difficulty, lastly, of obtaining porters was as insuperable as ever, and for the last stage of his wanderings in Manyema Livingstone had only three companions.<sup>1</sup> In all these circumstances there could be little scientific result from the Manyema venture; but Livingstone succeeded in reaching the Lualaba or Upper Congo—he hoped it was the Upper Nile—at Nyangwe in March 1871. He intended to go down the river to its confluence with the Lomame and follow the latter to its source; but for this the help of the Arab traders on the spot was needed, and in July he was so horrified by witnessing an unprovoked massacre of Manyema in the crowded market-place at Nyangwe by the Arabs, that he broke off all relations with them, and set off back to Ujiji. On the last stages of the march he was once more on the brink of collapse. 'I felt like dying on my feet,' he wrote in his journal. And when, on October 23, a 'mere ruckle of bones', he reached Ujiji, he found that every scrap of the stores sent up by Kirk had disappeared. Almost a fortnight

<sup>1</sup> Two of the three had been with him from the start in 1866—Susi, one of the Shupanga men, and Chuma, one of the Yao.



later, quite unexpectedly, the help he desperately needed came. On November 10 he was 'found' by Stanley.

Henry Morton Stanley,<sup>1</sup> as he is known to history, was born in 1841 in North Wales and given his father's name, John Rowlands. His father died in 1843, and, deserted by his mother, he drifted to the workhouse school at St. Asaph from which, at the age of fifteen, unable to endure the brutality of the sadistic master, he ran away. For a time he found work at Liverpool and then, in 1859, shipped as a cabin boy on a boat bound for the United States. At New Orleans he was befriended and presently adopted by a kindly cotton-broker, Henry Stanley, whose name he took. Adrift again on his benefactor's death, he was caught up in the Civil War—volunteering for the South, taken prisoner at Shiloh, obtaining his release by joining the North, taken ill and discharged in 1862. He then worked his way back to Liverpool and sought out his mother's family, only to be shown the door. For the next few years he continued his sea-life, finally enlisting in the Federal Navy. An account of the fighting at Fort Fisher which he submitted to an American newspaper was so well received that at the end of the war in 1865 he took up journalism as a career. In 1868 he joined the staff of the *New York Herald* and made his name by his reports of Napier's invasion of Abyssinia. At the end of that year, James Gordon Bennett, the *Herald's* young and vigorous proprietor, sent him to try to get into touch with Livingstone who was then believed to be somewhere on the Upper Nile, making his way homewards down the river. Finding no news of him at Aden, Stanley was recalled to Europe, and in October 1869 he was again commissioned by Bennett to 'find' Livingstone whose whereabouts and safety were then again under discussion in the press. Bennett was prepared to pay several thousand pounds, 'any price' indeed, for the *coup* of making contact with the famous explorer; but he was in no hurry about it, and in accordance with his instructions Stanley attended the opening of the Suez Canal, made a journey up the Nile, visited Jerusalem, Constantinople, and the Crimean battlefields, proceeded thence to the Caucasus and Persia and so by way of Bushire to Bombay. It was not till

<sup>1</sup> *The Autobiography of Sir Henry M. Stanley, G.C.B.* (London, 1909).

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January 6, 1871, fourteen months after receiving his commission, that he arrived at Zanzibar.

He was then only thirty years old, but the sufferings and achievements of those years had bred in him a boldness and hardness of character which were soon to leave their mark on Africa. It is ironical that popular tradition should link his name so intimately with Livingstone's; for two men could scarcely be more different. Nor was there any kinship with Stanley in Burton, Speke, or von der Decken. Stanley, in fact, was a new phenomenon in the field of East African exploration, new in the motives, methods and conditions of his work as much as in his personality. The other explorers were bent on 'opening up' Africa for scientific, humanitarian, and economic reasons. Stanley's first expedition was primarily for 'news'. The other explorers again were hampered at every turn by lack of adequate funds. Stanley had *carte blanche*.

At the time Stanley received his instructions Livingstone did not actually need 'finding'. From his own letters and from Arab reports he was known to have been at Ujiji in the summer of 1869. And though he had disappeared again into the 'bush' when Stanley came to Zanzibar, it was expected that he would return in due course to his base. A few months earlier, indeed, Consul Churchill, in order to make sure that Livingstone was not in want, had dispatched another caravan of food and goods to Ujiji. And to Ujiji, as has been seen, Livingstone did return. So far Churchill and Kirk were right: but they were unaware that the first lot of stores sent up to Ujiji had been stolen, that the second caravan was dawdling on the coast, and that Livingstone was in dire need of help. In fact he wanted not to be found, but to be relieved.<sup>1</sup>

Stanley's mission was a journalistic secret, and he was all the more anxious to keep it dark when he learnt something of Livingstone's solitary nature from Kirk. More than once in his journal<sup>2</sup> he recorded his anxiety lest Livingstone should hear of his approach and escape into the wilderness. Nobody knew, therefore, where Stanley was going when on March 21, having

<sup>1</sup> On his return to England Stanley publicly attacked Kirk for neglecting Livingstone's needs. This controversy will be fully dealt with in *Livingstone's Last Journey*.

<sup>2</sup> *How I found Livingstone* (London, 1st ed., 1872).

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made his preparations with characteristic speed, he started up the trade-route from Bagamoyo. It was an imposing company—no less than 157 porters, 23 'Baluchis', a few native servants, and three white men, 192 in all—and it moved at an unprecedented pace. Stanley's nervous energy was inexhaustible, and there is frequent mention in the journal of his dog-whip. When one of the two white men he took with him, Farquhar, fell ill, he left him behind to die in an African village. Similarly, at a later stage, when the other white man, Shaw, exhausted by persistent attacks of malaria, asked that he might be carried back to the coast, Stanley let him go, though he warned him, as he warned him, to his death. At Tabora, which was reached on June 23, it seemed as if with all his courage and will-power Stanley could get no farther. The war with Mirambo had set the whole countryside afire. On recovering from a severe attack of fever, Stanley joined in the conflict on the Arab side; but, when the Arabs were defeated and driven back on Tabora, he took advantage of a lull in the fighting to get away, and, slipping round the war zone by forced marches, attained his goal at Ujiji on November 10.<sup>1</sup>

Stanley's opportune arrival gave Livingstone, as he himself expressed it, 'new life'. It was not only the plentiful supplies of good food and, above all, of medicine: it was the renewal of contact with the outer world, the letters from home, the knowledge that his wanderings in Africa were still exciting public attention, that the Royal Geographical Society was deeply interested in the surroundings of Lake Tanganyika, that the Government had allocated £1,000 to equip an expedition to relieve him. In a few days he was almost his old self, and from November 16 to December 15 he was busy exploring the northern end of the Lake with Stanley. He then accompanied Stanley back to Tabora and stayed there with him from February 18 to March 14, when Stanley began his return journey to the coast. It is clear from his journal that Stanley was profoundly impressed by Livingstone's character, and he strongly urged him to come back with him to England. But Livingstone was determined to finish the task he had undertaken—the delineation of the Nile

<sup>1</sup> By Livingstone's reckoning (*Last Journals*, ii. 156) Stanley arrived on October 28.

and Congo watersheds. It would only take him, he thought, some six or seven months; and he was lavishly supplied by Stanley with stores and food. More stores and fifty porters were to be sent up by Stanley when he reached the coast.

Meantime the Government expedition, dispatched in the belief—which was true enough—that the war with Mirambo had blocked the normal channels of communication with Ujiji, was assembling at Zanzibar. Lieutenant Dawson, R.N., was in command, supported by Lieutenant Horn. The other two white men were the missionary, Charles New, and Livingstone's youngest son, Oswell. But they had not left the coast when Stanley arrived, and since Stanley, it appeared, had done the work allotted them and the way to Ujiji was now open, they returned to England. In the light of the fuller information provided by Stanley, a second 'Relief Expedition' was organised under Lieutenant V. L. Cameron, R.N.<sup>1</sup> Accompanied by Dr. Dillon and Lieutenant Murphy, he left Zanzibar on February 2, 1873, for Bagamoyo where he was joined by Robert Moffat, a nephew of Livingstone's. For nearly two months he wrestled with the old difficulty of getting porters, and it was not till March 28 that he got away from the coast. All the travellers suffered from time to time from fever, and in May Moffat died of it. Farther inland it was reported that the war was still going on and that the road was dangerous, but on August 2 the expedition safely reached Tabora. There they were all prostrated with fever. Dillon, like Speke, at one time was almost blind with it, and in November, in delirium, he shot himself. Meanwhile, on October 20, Chuma, one of Livingstone's three 'faithfuls', had arrived at Tabora and informed Cameron that Livingstone was dead and that he and his companions were bringing his body to the coast.

The purpose of the Relief Expedition being thus frustrated, Murphy resigned his post on it and accompanied the bearers of Livingstone's body to the coast. But Cameron decided to go on alone to Ujiji to collect any of Livingstone's belongings he might find there and to follow up his exploration of Manyema. On February 18, 1874, he reached Ujiji, and, after a further examination of the Lake, the greater part of which he mapped for the first time, he proceeded across Manyema to Nyangwe and

<sup>1</sup> He described his journey in *Across Africa* (London, 1877).

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thence made his way south-westwards till in November 1875 he emerged on the Atlantic coast near Benguela.

Only by returning home in 1872 could Livingstone have prolonged his life. Stanley's 'relief' had given him new energy, but his constitution was now too seriously impaired to stand the hardships of travel in difficult tropical country for any length of time. The porters engaged by Stanley did not arrive at Tabora till August. The rainy season had then begun, and when, after a toilsome march down the mountainous eastern outskirts of Lake Tanganyika, Livingstone struck west towards Lake Bangweolo, his progress was constantly barred by swamps and swollen rivers. His objective was Katanga, to the north-north-west of which he hoped to find the sources of the Congo or the Nile. But he had got no farther than the River Chambezi when persistent intestinal haemorrhage set in. For a few more weeks he had himself carried on in a litter along the watery fringe of Lake Bangweolo. Early in the morning on or about May 1, at Chitambo, he died.<sup>1</sup>

### 5

At Livingstone's death the great period of East African exploration may be said to have ended. In a remarkably short space of time the mystery of the interior had been cleared up. The old tradition of a vast inland sea—as old as history, but hitherto untested by European science—had been probed at last and the 'sea' revealed as a system of great lakes. The discovery of those lakes and their affluents—Nyasa and the Shiré by Livingstone, Tanganyika by Burton and Speke, Victoria Nyanza and the outflow of the Nile by Speke—was the major achievement; it made the main structure of the East African geography plain; and it was all done by British explorers and all within four years—1859 to 1862. Roscher's direct march to Lake Nyasa and von der Decken's exploration of Kilimanjaro,

<sup>1</sup> The last entry in Livingstone's journal is dated April 27, and Horace Waller, who edited it, gives the date of Livingstone's death as May 1, which Blaikie accepts. But Livingstone's African companions were unable to fix the day exactly, and the gravestone in Westminster Abbey gives May 4. *Last Journals*, ii. 303; Blaikie, 376.

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together with the earlier journeys of Krapf and Rebmann, filled in some of the blanks. It only remained for Thomson to find the way from Mombasa to Victoria Nyanza across the Kenya Highlands, and the essential features of the East African map would be known.

This stripping of the veil from East Africa was not only swift: it was cheap—all the British expeditions at any rate were underfinanced—and its only serious difficulty was the heavy strain it put on the explorers' physical and mental endurance. European penetration of unknown continents has been met, more often than not, by fierce resistance on the part of their inhabitants. But, though the opening-up of East Africa was soon to lead to European occupation and subjection, such opposition as the explorers encountered was feeble, spasmodic, and easily overcome or circumvented. Seyyid Majid, as has been seen, may have been uneasy and once at least may have tried to block the inland path; but all the expeditions except Stanley's were commended to him by the British Government and its agent at Zanzibar, and to all of them he gave his valuable 'passport' and to some an escort, not so valuable, of 'Baluchis'. Of his Arab and Swahili subjects, the traders residing on the coast were sometimes definitely obstructive and seem never to have been helpful; but inland the only unfriendly Arabs were those near Lake Nyasa who resented Livingstone's interference with the Slave Trade in that area. Everywhere else, whether settled at Tabora or Ujiji—for the Arabs whom Livingstone suspected of intercepting his communications with the coast became amicable and helpful in the end—or wandering far afield with their caravans, at Lake Bangweolo or along the Lualaba, the Arabs almost always treated the explorers courteously and often generously. To some extent, no doubt, this was due to the respect long accorded to the letters of commendation from their overlord at Zanzibar; but all the explorers testify to a sympathy and helpfulness which were more than formal. Burton wrote of 'the open-handed hospitality and hearty good-will' of the Arabs at Tabora, and Speke was equally appreciative when he was entertained by a lonely Arab trader on an island on Lake Tanganyika. 'These Arab merchants', he noted, 'are everywhere the same. Their warm and generous hospitality to a stranger equals anything I have ever seen elsewhere.' Cameron complained of

some smaller Arab or Swahili traders at Tabora obstructing him and tempting his porters to desert, but he 'could not speak too highly of the behaviour of the upper classes of Arabs' there and he was no less 'warmly welcomed' by the Arabs of Ujiji. Even Livingstone, who, unlike the other explorers, saw the Arabs at their worst and fiercely denounced the evil they were doing in East Africa, had reason to be grateful for their readiness to help him when he greatly needed help.<sup>1</sup>

Nor did the Indians in East Africa oppose or hinder the process of exploration. Burton's judgments of personal attitudes and motives are often untrustworthy, and his assertion that the 'banyans' thwarted his design to examine the River Rufiji in order to protect their interests in the gum-copal trade was directly denied by Rigby. Roscher spoke warmly of the 'great hospitality and kindness' of the 'banyans' on the coast, and Speke declared that 'nothing could exceed the mingled pride and pleasure these exotic Indians seemed to derive from having us as their guests'. The big business-men at Zanzibar had good reason for friendliness: as sellers of trade goods, stores and the general paraphernalia required for an expedition, they alone stood to gain directly from the new passion for exploration; but the lesser Indian traders on the coast seem to have felt that the British explorers at any rate had a sort of claim on British Indians. 'They looked upon us as their guardians', wrote Speke, 'and did everything they could to show they felt it so.'<sup>2</sup> It was the same up-country. Burton and Speke at Tabora were helped as much by Musa, the *doyen* of the inland Indian traders, as by the Arabs.<sup>3</sup>

What, lastly, of the Africans, the people whose country it was these intrusive strangers were trying to 'open up'? They were not, on the whole, unfriendly. The Somali of the coast-towns seem to have been less hostile than they once had been, but inland, as von der Decken and his companions discovered to their cost, it was a different story. Elsewhere the predatory, fighting tribes, the Fiti and the Masai, were as dangerous, no doubt, to Europeans as they were to their fellow Africans; but

<sup>1</sup> Burton, *Lake Regions of Central Africa*, i. 323. Speke, *What Led to the Discovery of the Sources of the Nile*, 198, 229. Cameron, *Across Africa*, i. 153, 163, 238. Livingstone, *Last Journals*, i. 210, 213, 276, 348.

<sup>2</sup> Rigby to G. of B. 16. xi. 60, quoted by Russell, 270-1.

<sup>3</sup> *East Africa and its Invaders*, 310.

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except on that one occasion in the Shiré Highlands in 1861 the explorers succeeded in avoiding contact with them. Among less militant folk there was a chance of misunderstandings and quarrels; and, since the other explorers were not so ready as Stanley to use force, they had sometimes to avoid the possibility of bloodshed by beating a retreat. In areas, too, through which an Arab caravan, seeking slaves and ivory by violence, had recently left its trail of slaughter and destruction, the Africans might well mistake the explorers for more enemies and attack them in desperation or revenge. Livingstone nearly lost his life on that account at Manyema. But, broadly speaking, the black man's attitude to the unprecedented spectacle of a white man was inspired by the irresistible attraction of the unknown. They were afire with curiosity, frankly inquisitive, often startled and bewildered by what the strange creatures did, yet rarely, if the creatures knew how to behave, antagonised. Above all, and not unnaturally, they were acquisitive. Most of the exploration lay through country in which the people lived in relatively small and loosely co-ordinated communities, so that the explorers had to deal with an interminable sequence of petty chiefs; and, as soon as these chiefs realised that all the strangers wanted was to pass through the territory in which their tribal authority was recognised, they exacted a price for it from those tempting loads of cloth and beads and wire which every expedition carried. Next, indeed, to complaints about getting porters in the explorers' journals come complaints about *hongo*. Speke's victimisation has been mentioned. Burton, Grant, von der Decken, Stanley, Cameron, all grumble about it too. In Ugogo, on the main road to Tabora, it cost in goods something like a pound a mile. If Livingstone was less fleeced, it was mainly because he usually had so little to buy his way with.

In Usambara and Uganda and its neighbourhood the tribes had coalesced into larger political entities; and the paramount chiefs or 'kings' of these African states, as they can be called, were more dignified and ceremonious in their relations with the explorers. If anything they were friendlier than the average petty chief. Kimweri of Usambara welcomed Krapf to his capital and encouraged him in his ambition to found a mission-station in the country.<sup>1</sup> Rumanika of Karagwe evinced the

<sup>1</sup> *East Africa and its Invaders*, 395.



keenest interest in the progress of Speke and Grant towards his country and sent his officers to the frontier to escort them to his presence. He made a point of their being protected from the exactions of smaller men by the way. They were 'his guests'. 'He was alarmed, he confessed,' wrote Speke, 'when he heard we were coming to visit him, thinking we might prove some fearful monsters that were not quite human, but now he was delighted beyond all measure with what he saw of us.' It is fair to add that Rumanika was presented with a variety of gifts and, on the other hand, that he pressed Speke—who tactfully declined—to accept all the ivory he could carry, 'as a lasting remembrance of the honour I had done him in visiting Karagwe in his lifetime.'<sup>1</sup> The reception accorded Speke and Grant by the bigger potentate, Mtesa, was not quite so friendly. They were royally housed and fed; but their host insisted on an adequate return—a rifle or so, a gold ring, pistols, boxes, tools and what not; and it was mainly the opportunity it would offer of obtaining more treasures of the kind from Europe that interested Mtesa in Speke's idea of opening up a direct route from Uganda to the coast. None of the explorers record much interchange of ideas, and it is hardly to be expected that the untutored African would realise the value of the European's knowledge or that the European would be capable of making it understood. Rumanika, it is true, betrayed an insatiable thirst for lessons in geography. But Mtesa, though he once engaged in a lengthy talk about disease and drugs, was of too restless and capricious a temper for intellectual discourse. What he really enjoyed was to go shooting with Speke and his new guns.<sup>2</sup>

## 6

The results of this first wave of exploration were more than scientific—a term that covers, besides geographical exploration, all the detailed information recorded so copiously in the explorers' journals as to the appearance, customs and beliefs of the people they encountered. A process of 'opening up' was bound

<sup>1</sup> Speke (*Discovery of the Source of the Nile*, 210) gives the list of gifts: 'One block-tin box, one Raglan coat, five yards scarlet broadcloth, two coils copper wire, a hundred large blue egg-beads, five bundles best variegated beads, three bundles minute beads—pink, blue and white.'

<sup>2</sup> Speke, chaps. viii, x-xiv. Grant, chap. x.

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to have economic and political results. These, however, were slow to mature. Livingstone, as has been seen, linked commerce with Christianity as an instrument for civilising Africa. The principal objective of the Zambesi Expedition was the establishment of a commercial centre in the heart of Africa and the development of its natural resources for purposes of trade; and in his later journeys Livingstone notes from time to time the economic potentialities of the country he traverses or hears about—possibilities of cotton-growing here and there, copper and gold in Katanga and so forth. All the other explorers show a similar interest. Burton was instructed 'to determine the exportable produce of the interior', and as an appendix to the narrative of his expedition he published a comprehensive report on the export and import trade of the coast and its *hinterland*; but he concluded it by asserting that the acquisition of a share in that trade by the 'civilised world' depended on the provision of easy access to the interior. Speke, too, was interested in the economic side of exploration: he mentions, for example, the warm support accorded to the expedition of 1859 by the Governor of Bombay, Lord Elphinstone, on the ground that it would probably lead to an expansion of trade between West India and East Africa; and more than once in his journals he comments on the richness of the country in natural resources, and the desire of chiefs and elders to make contact with 'the commerce of the coast'. But, like Burton, he sees little opportunity for commercial enterprise at the moment. Peace must come first. Cameron, likewise, regards East Africa as a great potential market for British manufactures, but it is only potential.<sup>1</sup>

The explorers found in fact that ideas of commercial development in East Africa were premature. It was not only the difficulty of transit and transport. It was also, and more so, the social unsettlement and the material destruction brought about by the Slave Trade. The Slave Trade, similarly, and nothing else inspired the only allusions made by the British explorers to the possible political results of their 'opening up' of mid-East

<sup>1</sup> Burton, ii. 387-419. Speke, *What Led to the Discovery, etc.*, 158, 330. Cameron, see p. 222, below. Von der Decken comments at length on the fruits, vegetables, cereals, spices and other useful plants grown in Zanzibar, and discusses banana cultivation on Kilimanjaro and sugar cultivation in Usambara (Kersten, i. 27 ff, 269, 317), but seems little interested in economic development in general.

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Africa. Livingstone did not regard his original project of a 'colony' at the source of the Zambesi as involving any expansion of the British Empire: he only insisted on free trade. Similarly his appeal for the 'colonisation' of the Shiré Highlands when he saw them first at peace was an appeal for British missionaries and traders, not for the British flag. It was only when the slave-raiders made their way into that area and under his very eyes began their hideous work that, convinced that annexation alone could stop it, he asked the Foreign Office: 'Is it any part of my duty to take possession of new discoveries as of Her Majesty?'—a question to which Lord John Russell answered with a prompt and chilling 'No'.<sup>1</sup> To Speke, too, it seemed that the depopulation and devastation caused by the Slave Trade and the inter-tribal warfare it provoked could only be prevented by a European administration of the interior. Mindful, no doubt, of the India he knew, he declares that 'a few score Europeans' ruling the country would completely transform it in a few years' time. An extensive market would be opened to the world, the present nakedness of the land would have a covering, and industry and commerce would clear the way for civilisation and enlightenment.'<sup>2</sup>

It was natural, perhaps, that the British explorers should think of annexation primarily as a means of abolishing the Slave Trade. The acquisition of 'colonies' as an end in itself had ceased to appeal to British public opinion in the second half of the nineteenth century. There were some, indeed, who thought that Britain had already undertaken too many obligations overseas. Nor was there any popular interest at that period in the strategic aspect of colonisation. Britain, it seemed, had all the naval bases she wanted. But in Germany it was otherwise. Germany had no colonies, and for some time past a movement had been gathering force, especially in the Hanseatic seaports, in favour of colonial expansion whether for the disposal of surplus population or for increasing overseas trade or merely for national prestige, for having what France and Britain had. It is not surprising, therefore, to find von der Decken thinking of a German colony in East Africa and thinking of it more for political and economic than for humanitarian purposes. 'I am per-

<sup>1</sup> *Kirk on the Zambesi*, 264-5, 270-1.

<sup>2</sup> *What Led to the Discovery, etc.*, 344.

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suaded', he wrote from the Juba in the summer of 1864, 'that in a short time a colony established here would be most successful, and after two or three years would be self-supporting. It would become of special importance after the opening of the Suez Canal. It is unfortunate that we Germans allow such opportunities of acquiring colonies to slip, especially at a time when it would be of importance to the navy.' Kersten shared his leader's views. In 1866 he published an article on the colonisation of East Africa in which the following passage occurred: 'Von der Decken said on many occasions that he would not hesitate, if Seyyid Majid agreed to it, to buy Mom-basa from the Sultan in order to found an establishment and place the commerce of the interior in the hands of Europeans and especially of Germans. After two or three years' stay at Chagga . . . the colonists would obtain more results than emigrants who wander far across the seas. I recommend to my country an enterprise as advantageous as it is glorious for individuals and for the nation.'<sup>1</sup> Such, too, no doubt, were the ideas which prompted Brenner's secret treaty with the Sultan of Witu. Von der Decken and his disciples were sowing seeds of growth to come.

Doubtless the British explorers were as anxious as their German colleagues to promote the advantage and the glory of their country. But no one who takes the trouble to read the accounts they gave of their journeys will find any trace in them of what came to be called 'imperialism'. It is the Slave Trade, not national interest, that calls for European intervention. And it was their revelation of what the Slave Trade was doing in East Africa that made the deepest impression on public opinion at home. The curtain which from the dawn of history had shrouded the vast interior of the continent had at last been drawn aside to reveal a country which seemed only to need the stimulus of intercourse with the outer world to become as prosperous and civilised as other backward countries had become, but which, unless something could be done to stop the Slave Trade, was doomed, province by province, to desolation and decay as the raiders penetrated farther and farther inland. All the explorers witnessed and recorded the enactment of this enormous crime: but it was Livingstone's evidence that told

<sup>1</sup> J. Scott Keltie, *The Partition of Africa* (London, 1893), 108.

most. For the British people had made Livingstone the hero of their day; and their interest and pride in him were heightened by the dramatic and ultimately tragic story of his last long journey—the disappearance in the void, the rumour of murder and its correction, the second period of silence suddenly broken by Stanley's swift and striking venture, and then, when news was expected of home-coming, news, instead, of the body being carried to the coast. It has been truly said that the scientific results of Livingstone's last journey were quite outweighed by its effect in strengthening his appeal to public sentiment; and from all that was heard of him in the later years, from Stanley's account of him, from the letters that got through, from the pages finally of his own record of his wanderings, it was clear that that appeal had become concentrated on one immediate need. The opening-up of Africa, the spread of Christianity, the development of commerce and colonisation—all that was secondary now; for it all awaited, it all necessitated, the abolition of the Slave Trade. Again and again he depicts its horrors and demands its ending. 'No one can estimate the amount of good that will be done if this awful Slave Trade be abolished. This will be something to have lived for.' 'If my disclosures should lead to the suppression of the Slave Trade, I shall regard that as a greater matter by far than the discovery of all the Nile sources together.' 'Spare no pains'—this in a letter to Kirk—'in attempting to persuade your superiors to this end.' 'All I can say in my solitude is, may Heaven's rich blessing come down on everyone—American, English, Turk—who will help to heal this open sore of the world.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Blaikie (6th ed.), 374, 382. Stanley (1st ed.), 618.

## VII

# THE ARAB SLAVE TRADE

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### I

The Arab Slave Trade was as old as the Arab connexion with East Africa. Our earliest description of that country, the Greek *Periplus* or guide for navigators, written about A.D. 80, tells of Arabs trading down the coast and of 'slaves of the better sort' being exported from Somaliland to Egypt.<sup>1</sup> How long before that date the Slave Trade had begun it is impossible to say, but after that time presumably it continued up to the period of the Arab colonisation of the coastland which started about A.D. 700. Thenceforward a steady supply of slaves was obtained from the interior both for the domestic use of the Arab colonists and also, and in greater volume as time went on, for export oversea to Arabia, Irak, Turkey, Persia and India. Slave-armies were maintained in Irak in the ninth century and in Bengal in the fifteenth. Between 1486 and 1493 the latter kingdom was ruled by two African slave soldiers.<sup>2</sup> African slaves were shipped to the East Indies and were even to be seen as far east as China.<sup>3</sup>

This business of robbing Africa of Africans had thus been carried on by Asiatics for fourteen hundred years and probably a good deal longer before Europe took a hand in it. During their occupation of the coast from Sofala to Mogadishu the Portuguese exported slaves, partly eastwards to their settlements in India and the Indies, but mainly westwards round the Cape and over the Atlantic to Brazil. Spaniards and Frenchmen also took part in due course in this trade from Mozambique—the latter needing slaves not only for the plantations of the French West Indies but for those of Île de France and Bourbon. British

<sup>1</sup> *East Africa and its Invaders*, 17.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 32-3.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 33-4.

'slavers', content, no doubt, with their major share in the West African trade, neglected the East African field; and the entry of the British into East African waters—their naval mastery of the Indian Ocean and their annexation of Cape Colony, Mauritius and the Seychelles—coincided, as it happened, not only with the complete suppression of their own Slave Trade but also with the initiation of their attempt to stop it being carried on by any other people. From 1815 onwards British diplomacy, backed at need by financial inducements, was continuously exerted to persuade the governments concerned to legislate against the Trade and—what proved to be of more practical value—to conclude treaties enabling the British navy to assist on a nominally reciprocal basis in the execution of the law. To some extent, as has been stated in Chapter I, these efforts had proved successful by the end of Seyyid Said's reign. Something had been done at the import end of the Trade by prohibitive measures in British India and by treaties with Persia and the Arabs of the Persian Gulf. More had been done at the export end, *i.e.* the East African coast, by treaties with Spain, Portugal, and France and with King Radama of Madagascar. By 1852 the shipping of slaves from Mozambique across the Atlantic had been reduced to a small fraction of its earlier volume.<sup>1</sup> In the early 'sixties it dried up altogether.<sup>2</sup> The local need for labour, on the other hand, in Réunion (as Bourbon was renamed in 1848) and in the islands of Nossi-bé and Mayotta acquired by the French in 1840-43, was still being met by a process not very different from the Slave Trade. The French planters of Mauritius, being now British subjects, had been able to replace slave labour with that of 'coolies' from British India; but the Government of India had forbidden the engagement of Indians from the territories under its control for service on foreign soil; and since their possessions in India were far too small to provide the requisite labour, the French authorities determined to obtain it from Africa. In 1843 a system, known as the 'Free Labour Emigration System', was introduced, under which slaves were purchased by French officials from Arab traders, mainly at Kilwa, formally set free, and then engaged as 'voluntary' emigrants to work for a period of years at Réunion, Mayotta or Nossi-bé.

<sup>1</sup> For details, see *East Africa and its Invaders*, chaps. vii and xvi.

<sup>2</sup> *Report of the East African Slave Trade Committee, 1871*, Q. 53, 542-3.

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This new demand inevitably stimulated Arab slave raiding in the interior. In 1854, moreover, the Portuguese Government were induced to permit the extension of the 'system' to Mozambique with the result that, as Livingstone found on the Zambesi Expedition, the old traffic from Lake Nyasa to the Portuguese coast, which had been reduced to a minimum in the course of the preceding decade, was briskly revived. The British Government strongly and repeatedly protested; but French Ministers made it clear that, as long as 'free labour' from British India was denied to their colonists, they would continue to obtain 'free labour' from East Africa. In 1861 the British Government conceded the right to hire British Indian 'coolies', and in 1864 the 'system' was abolished.<sup>1</sup>

There remained the purely Arab Slave Trade—the trade that was not only fed, like the European, by Arab raiders but directed oversea in Arab ships to Arab and other Asiatic markets. That the system of treaties and naval patrols had failed to stop this Arab Trade as it had practically stopped the European is clear enough from the facts recorded in the preceding chapter. Why this 'policy of restriction' was unsuccessful and how it was finally superseded by a more effective policy will be explained in due course. In this chapter a brief description must be given of the course and character of the Trade by land and sea. There is copious evidence for it. On land the explorers, on sea the naval patrols, saw the Trade in operation at close quarters, and all the former and several of the latter wrote down what they saw.

### 2

A supply of slaves, whether for domestic use at Zanzibar and the coast towns or for sale oversea, could only be obtained in the interior, and slave hunting in one form or another was, together with the quest of ivory, the main objective of those Arab caravans which had penetrated so far inland in the course of Said's reign. The composition of a caravan was always much the same—two or three Arab merchants in charge with their half-caste hangers-on, a body of armed slaves, and the long string of porters, slave or free, with the scarlet flag of the Sultan at their

<sup>1</sup> For the 'system', see *Kirk on the Zambesi*, 266–8; *East Africa and its Invaders*, 427–35; and the authorities there cited.



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head—but its numbers varied from a hundred or so to a thousand and even more. The principal route for slaves in Majid's time ran from Kilwa to Lake Nyasa, the neighbourhood of which was then the chief source of supply; but slave gangs were to be met with often enough on the other 'trunk road' of the day, the route from Bagamoyo to the 'colony' at Tabora and thence to Lake Tanganyika.<sup>1</sup>

At all points on their way inland and back again the traders were anxious to pick up slaves if only in twos or threes. Kidnapping of natives by natives was rife along the main routes, 'for the Arabs buy whoever is brought to them';<sup>2</sup> and the victims were sometimes caught while walking in the 'bush' quite close to their villages.<sup>3</sup> Occasionally a chief would be tempted to punish crime by selling the culprit to the traders. Livingstone reports a case of an old chief selling 'his young and good-looking wife for unfaithfulness, as he alleged'.<sup>4</sup> But the main sources of supply were the organised slave-raids in the chosen areas, which shifted steadily farther inland as tract after tract became 'worked out'. The Arabs might conduct a raid themselves, but more usually they incited a chief to attack another tribe, lending him their own armed slaves and guns to ensure his victory.<sup>5</sup> The result, of course, was an increase in intertribal warfare till 'the whole country was in a flame'.<sup>6</sup> A deplorable example was the fate that befell Usambara. Under 'king' Kimweri it constituted a compact little African state in which, as its European visitors testified, a number of kindred tribes had been welded together under a single system of peace and law. But in 1873 Kirk reported its

<sup>1</sup> For further details of the caravans and colonies, see *East Africa and its Invaders*, chap. x.

<sup>2</sup> Livingstone, *Last Journals*, i. 66.

<sup>3</sup> Cameron, *Across Africa*, i. 342. Capt. P. Colomb, *Slave Catching in the Indian Ocean* (London, 1873), 29. Capt. G. L. Sullivan, *Dhow Chasing in Zanzibar Waters* (London, 1873), 184.

<sup>4</sup> Livingstone, *L. J.*, i. 300.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 78. Krapf, the C.M.S. Missionary at Rabai, wrote as follows about the Pangani district: 'The Arabs of Zanzibar come here and promise the Segua chiefs a number of muskets and shot for a certain number of slaves; so, when a chief has entered into the contract, he suddenly falls on a hostile village, sets it on fire, and carries off the inhabitants.' *1871 Committee*, p. 115.

<sup>6</sup> Livingstone, *Zambesi Expedition*, 360, and *Last Journals*, i. 126. Burton, *Lake Districts*, i. 89. Speke, *What Led to the Discovery, etc.*, 235. Waller, *1871 Committee*, Q. 1352.

temporary disruption after Kimweri's death. 'The tribes commenced fighting with each other. Captives were sold, and slaves brought in thousands into Pangani which suddenly became a great place of export from having imported slaves from Kilwa the year before. This slave war did not last long as the place was depopulated to such an extent that the few remaining villages became afraid; but the same thing still goes on, though to a less extent, here as elsewhere along the coast.'<sup>1</sup>

A village having been carried by assault, all the inhabitants who had not escaped or been killed in the fighting were rounded up—except those who were too old and decrepit to be saleable—and the huts were then set on fire. Three villages were once seen burning within two hours.<sup>2</sup> Cattle would be driven off. Standing crops might be cut down or left to rot. There was no one left to cultivate them, unless a handful of fugitives crept back to 'the wreck of their homes'—the half-burned huts, the blackened ground strewn with broken household goods and bits of furniture, the unburied dead, and the silence.<sup>3</sup> This destruction was often widespread. The explorers speak of 'miles of ruined villages'.<sup>4</sup> Nor were the actual slave-raids the only injury done to the countryside. If they occurred in the sowing season, the strife and anarchy they provoked meant insufficient crops and famine. And that in turn increased the Trade; for a starving tribe would sell its own folk for food. 'A chief without food and without the means of buying food will sell off his people very cheaply indeed . . . I have known children of the age of from 8 to 10 years bought for less corn than would go into one of our hats.'<sup>5</sup>

The slaves' worst sufferings were those they endured between their capture and their ultimate consignment to their masters. The march to the coast, to begin with, was a terrible experience. From the Great Lakes it often lasted three months or more. The slaves were usually roped or chained together from neck to neck

<sup>1</sup> K. to Frere, II. v. 73; *P.R.G.S.* xvii. 340–1. For Usambara under Kimweri, see *East Africa and its Invaders*, 345–52. The 'kingdom' soon recovered its unity under Kimweri's son: see p. 256 below.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. H. Waller, *1871 Committee*, Q. 945.

<sup>3</sup> Burton, i. 185. Cameron, i. 340; ii. 137 (the latter an instance of Portuguese slave-raiding in Angola).

<sup>4</sup> Livingstone, *Last Journals*, i. 77; ii. 145, 212. Von der Decken (Rigby, *1871 Committee*, Q. 611).

<sup>5</sup> Waller, *1871 Committee*, Q. 938.

in gangs, with their hands bound behind their backs, and sometimes they were 'gagged by having a piece of wood like a snaffle tied into their mouths'. If refractory or suspected of trying to escape they were shackled with beams of wood, 'as thick as a man's thigh', it might be, 'and six feet long with a fork at one extremity in which the neck was secured by an iron pin.' Often a longer and lighter piece of wood, forked at each end, was used to yoke two slaves together.<sup>1</sup> If a halt were called for trading or getting more slaves, the gang was herded together in a hastily built stockade. Livingstone once saw eighty-five slaves, mostly boys of about 8, in this kind of pen.<sup>2</sup> But the most striking feature of the coastward march was the Arab's callous disregard of life. It was not only slaves who resisted their captors or tried to break away that were shot down. Often enough the same punishment awaited the slave who from illness or exhaustion could not keep up with the caravan, and in the latter case it was usually a woman. There was plenty of grim evidence to show the explorers that they were on the heels of a slave caravan. 'We passed a woman tied by the neck to a tree and dead.' 'To-day we came upon a man dead from starvation.' 'We passed a slave woman shot or stabbed through the body. . . . An Arab early that morning had done it in anger at losing the price he had given for her because she was unable to walk any longer.' 'One woman, who was unable to carry both her load and young child, had the child taken from her and saw its brains dashed out on a stone.'<sup>3</sup> Sometimes a caravan had to pass through a district in which drought or warfare had caused a famine, and then whole gangs of slaves might be left in the 'bush', sometimes still yoked together, to die of hunger.<sup>4</sup> No wonder that the routes frequented by the slave-traders could be recognised by the skeletons to be seen at intervals beside the track. All in all, the march to the coast was a shocking business—so shocking that those who witnessed and recorded it doubted if their fellow-countrymen at home would quite believe them. Not long before his death

<sup>1</sup> Kirk's Diary, quoted in *Kirk on the Zambesi*, 194. Livingstone, *Zambesi Expedition*, 356, with a sketch of a slave gang on the march as he saw it. Cameron, i. 341.

<sup>2</sup> Livingstone, *Last Journals*, i. 107.

<sup>3</sup> Livingstone, i. 56, 62, 65. Kirk, *Kirk on the Zambesi*, 194. Waller, 1871 *Committee*, Q. 940.

<sup>4</sup> Livingstone, i. 62. Waller, 1871 *Committee*, Q. 940.

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Livingstone noted in his journal that in describing the Slave Trade in the interior as he had seen it he had deemed it 'necessary to keep far within the truth in order not to be thought guilty of exaggeration'. 'But', he added, 'in sober seriousness the subject does not admit of exaggeration. To overdraw its evils is a simple impossibility. The sights I have seen, though common incidents of the traffic, are so nauseous that I always strive to drive them from memory.'<sup>1</sup>

Livingstone, Kirk, and Waller, the last of whom took part in Bishop Mackenzie's attempt to found a mission station in the Shiré Highlands, all asserted that 'four or five lives were lost for every slave delivered safe at Zanzibar'.<sup>2</sup> That the Arabs should have been so reckless is not easy to explain. Was it just bad temper and brutality? Or was it that the profit on the coast for every slave was so high that it did not seem to matter how many perished on the way? 'It is like sending up to London for a large block of ice in the summer,' said Waller: 'you know that a certain amount will melt away before it reaches you in the country, but that which remains will be quite sufficient for your wants.'<sup>3</sup> Nor was all the mortality due to the rigours and cruelties of the caravans. There was also the bloodshed caused by the raids and the intertribal fighting they provoked. If that were taken into account, Livingstone calculated that the price of every living slave was not five deaths but at least ten.<sup>4</sup> Most of the explorers, indeed, described the areas scoured by the slave-traders as not merely devastated, but depopulated. There is no reason to doubt the information given to Rigby by men who knew the Kilwa slave route. 'Natives of India who have resided many years at Kilwa . . . state that districts near Kilwa, extending to ten or twelve days' journey, which a few years ago were thickly populated, are now entirely uninhabited; and an Arab who has lately returned from Lake Nyasa informed me that he travelled for seventeen days through a country covered with ruined towns and villages which a few years ago were inhabited by the Mijana and Mijan tribes and where now no living soul is to be seen.'<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Last Journals*, ii. 212.

<sup>2</sup> *1871 Committee*, Q. 938.

<sup>3</sup> Coghlan to G. of B., i. xi. 60: *1871 Committee*, 116. See also Vivian, *1871 Committee*, Q. 53.

<sup>4</sup> C. Vivian, *1871 Committee*, Q. 25.

<sup>5</sup> *Zambesi Expedition*, 392.

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The explorers told the same story of other parts of the interior. 'The villages were all deserted. . . . The whole country was painfully quiet.' 'The interior is drained of all its working men.' 'Africa is bleeding out her lifeblood at every pore. A rich country, requiring labour only to render it one of the greatest producers in the world, is having its population, already far too scanty for its needs, daily depleted by the Slave Trade and internecine war.' Cameron went so far as to say that, if the Slave Trade were not stopped, it would 'die a natural death from the total destruction of the population'.<sup>1</sup>

### 3

Arrived at Kilwa or some other port on the coast, the slaves were herded in pens or 'barracoons' to await the next stage of their long journey—the voyage over a sea they had never seen. The dhows in which they were shipped were lightly built sailing boats, occasionally partly decked but usually quite open, and with an average burden of 80 tons.<sup>2</sup> 'In these vessels temporary platforms of bamboos are erected, leaving a narrow passage in the centre. The Negroes are then stowed, in the literal sense of the word, in bulk, the first along the floor of the vessel, two adults side by side, with a boy or girl resting between or on them, until the tier is complete. Over them the first platform is laid, supported an inch or two clear of their bodies, when a second tier is stowed, and so on until they reach above the gunwale of the vessel.'<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Livingstone, *Zambesi Expedition*, 551. Speke, 218, 236. Cameron, i. 209, 277. The depopulation of the Shiré Valley as seen by Livingstone was mainly due to the passage of the Fiti (or Mazitu as he called them), a militant Bantu tribe, whose long marauding expeditions were traditional and not due to the Slave Trade. On that account Dr. Steere, head of the Universities' Mission at Zanzibar, thought Livingstone wrong in ascribing the depopulation of the interior to the Slave Trade (*1871 Committee*, Q. 994-5). Captain Colomb also questioned whether it was the Trade rather than wars which the Trade had not provoked that accounted for depopulation (*op. cit.*, 28-30). But Steere never went far inland and Colomb never left the coast, whereas Livingstone traversed depopulated areas which had not been exposed to Fiti or Masai raids, and so did Burton, Speke and Cameron.

<sup>2</sup> Colomb, 55-6, and *1871 Committee*, Q. 1241.

<sup>3</sup> Captain Moresby, quoted in *East Africa and its Invaders*, 230. See also Sullivan, 114 (with sketch to show this method of packing), Rigby, *1871 Committee*, Q. 561-2, and Steere, *ibid.*, Q. 1048.

The voyage from Kilwa to Zanzibar took from one to three days in normal weather, but a calm or 'unexpected land breeze' might make it longer, and in that case the sufferings of the tightly packed slaves, with little food and water or none at all, can be imagined. A naval officer reported one case of less than a dozen survivors from a cargo of about 300 after a ten days' voyage. 'Those of the lower portion that die cannot be removed: they remain until the upper part are dead and thrown over-board.'<sup>1</sup> Packed slave dhows coming into harbour were a familiar sight at Zanzibar. Grant saw them—'rakish-looking craft, crammed with naked slaves for the market, all as silent as death'.<sup>2</sup> 'They used to go round our house', said Dr. Steere, whose mission building stood at the waterside, 'close to our windows: the deck of the dhow would be entirely covered with slaves squatting side by side, so closely packed that it was impossible for them to move.'<sup>3</sup> The landing of the 'cargo' of slaves was thus described by Rigby: 'They are frequently in the last stage of lingering starvation and unable to stand. Some drop dead in the custom-house and in the streets. Others who are not likely to recover are left on board to die in order that the owner may avoid paying the duty which is levied on those landed. After being brought on shore the slaves are kept some time in the dealers' houses until they gain strength and flesh when they are taken to the slave market and sold to the highest bidder.'<sup>4</sup>

European visitors to Zanzibar rarely neglected to visit the slave market, and several descriptions are on record, one of them written as early as 1811.<sup>5</sup> The following is Captain Sullivan's account of 1868: 'The first thing that meets the eye is a number of slaves arranged in a semi-circle with their faces towards the centre of the square. Most of them are standing up, but some are utterly incapable of standing upon their feet, miserable emaciated skeletons on whom disease and perhaps starvation has placed its fatal mark. . . . Inside this semi-circle are half a dozen or more Arabs, talking together, examining the slaves, discussing their points, and estimating their value, just as

<sup>1</sup> Moresby, *loc. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> *A Walk Across Africa*, 12.

<sup>3</sup> 1871 *Committee*, Q. 1048.

<sup>4</sup> Report for 1859-60: Russell, 333. Hamerton gave a similar account of the landing: Rigby to G. of B., 14. v. 61, *S.P.* lii (1861-2), 688.

<sup>5</sup> This detailed account by Captain Smee is given in full in *East Africa and its Invaders*, 184.

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farmers examine and value cattle at an English fair. Near the middle of the square are groups of children, also arranged close together in semi-circles and sitting down when not under inspection by would-be purchasers, . . . some not more than five years old. . . . In another portion of the square are a number of women, forming several semi-circles. Their bodies are painted and their figures exposed in proportion to their symmetry, with barely a yard of cloth around their hips. Rows of girls from the age of twelve and upwards are exposed to the examination of throngs of Arabs and subjected to inexpressible indignities by the brutal dealers. On entering the market on one occasion we saw several Arab slave-dealers around these poor creatures; they were in treaty for the purchase of three or four women who had been made to take off the only rag of a garment which they wore. On catching sight of English faces there was a commotion among the Arabs, and the women were hurried off round a corner out of sight.<sup>1</sup>

Captain Colomb, who throughout his account of patrol work is always on guard against emotional exaggeration, did not observe brutality or indecency when he visited the market; but he was horrified at the spectacle of starved slaves with their sunken chests, protruding eyes and knotted limbs, and he confessed it was impossible to see 'human beings penned and sold like cattle . . . without nausea and disgust'.<sup>2</sup> What the average British seaman thought of it may be inferred from the fact that it was considered dangerous to allow the crews of the patrolling squadron to go ashore at Zanzibar lest they should be tempted to 'make a clearance' of the market.<sup>3</sup>

Only a small proportion of the slaves found their new homes in Zanzibar or the Arab towns along the African coast. The great majority were bought by dealers from Arabia and, the same duty on each having been paid for export as for import, they were packed into dhows for their second and longer voyage.

<sup>1</sup> Sullivan, 253-4. Another full description is given by Mr. C. H. Hill, a member of Sir Bartle Frere's mission in 1873; K.P. IIIa, 47-8. See also W. C. Devereux, *A Cruise in the Gorgon* (London, 1869), 103-4; Admiral Cockburn, *1871 Committee*, Q. 186; Burton, *Zanzibar*, i. 351-2; Livingstone, *Last Journals*, i. 7; Speke, *What Led to the Discovery of the Source of the Nile*, 190.

<sup>2</sup> Colomb, 390-402.

<sup>3</sup> Colomb, 402; cf. Rear-Admiral Hillyar, *1871 Committee*, Q. 1164.

From Kilwa or elsewhere to Zanzibar their shipment had been legal; but to take them anywhere north of Lamu was contrary to the Treaty of 1845 and to the Sultan's orders. Some dhows, therefore, slipping away at night, struck out daringly across the open sea for the Arabian coast.<sup>1</sup> The usual course, however, was to hug the African shore, slinking from inlet to inlet, as far as Lamu or sometimes Barawa, and then, if no cruiser were in sight, to make a dash for the Red Sea or for Muscat and the Persian Gulf.<sup>2</sup>

The distance from Zanzibar by way of Lamu to the Red Sea is roughly 2,000 miles and to the Persian Gulf 1,200 miles. With a good wind and current and no break except for water and food the voyage might take at the best no more than eight or nine days; but it was often much longer—the average length from Zanzibar to Muscat was thirty to thirty-five days—and since the Arabs seem usually to have risked a shortage of food and water, for themselves as well as for the slaves, the state of the 'cargo' was often far worse than on the short run from Kilwa to Zanzibar.<sup>3</sup> Colomb was careful again to explain that the voyage was often not uncomfortable. He once caught a dhow with 113 slaves 'as plump and good-humoured as possible', but in another dhow, which had been at sea for over three weeks, he found some of its 60 slaves 'horribly emaciated'.<sup>4</sup> Of several other bad cases on record, one may be given as typical—that of a dhow caught by H.M.S. *Daphne* on the Somali coast with 156 slaves on board: 'On the bottom of the dhow was a pile of stones as ballast, and on these stones, without even a mat, were twenty-three women huddled together, one or two with infants in their arms. These women were literally doubled up, there being no room to sit erect. On a bamboo deck, about three feet above the keel, were forty-eight men, crowded together in the same way; and on another deck above this were fifty-three children. Some of the slaves were in the last stages of starvation and dysentery. On getting the vessel alongside and clearing her out, a woman came up having an infant about a month or six weeks old in her

<sup>1</sup> Kirk to Granville, 25. i. 72: F.O. 84. 1357.

<sup>2</sup> Churchill, 1871 *Committee*, Q. 309, 311, 357. Slaves were sometimes marched overland to the Somali ports to avoid cruisers: Sullivan, 154. They might be kept some time at these ports awaiting final shipment. Churchill, 1871 *Committee*, Q. 357.

<sup>3</sup> Colomb, 45. Rigby, 1871 *Committee*, Q. 563.

<sup>4</sup> Colomb, 40-1, and 1871 *Committee*, Q. 1236.



arms with one side of its forehead crushed in. On our asking how it was done she told us that, just before our boat came alongside the dhow, the child began to cry, and one of the Arabs, fearing the English would hear it, took up a stone and struck it. A few hours after this the poor thing died.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the dhows made their way into the Red Sea at the turn of the 'monsoon' and delivered their 'cargoes' at the ports of western Arabia. Others put in on the southern coast. But the majority made for Muscat or Sur or the Persian Gulf. Slaves were landed at various points on the west shore of the Gulf, and some of them were taken across the desert to Riyadh, the Wahabi capital. Bushire was the chief port of entry for the Persian markets, and Basra and Mohammareh for Bagdad and other centres of the Turkish empire.<sup>2</sup>

It was a long journey for those Africans, who had never left home before, from the smoking village by the Great Lakes to Zanzibar, Lamu, Muscat, Riyadh or Bagdad. Many of them, as has been seen, did not survive it. For those who did, the worst of their new life was usually over at the journey's end. Among Arabs, at any rate, the treatment of slaves by their owners was usually in sharp contrast with the brutality of the raiders and traders.<sup>3</sup> Humane treatment of slaves was enjoined by the Koran; and while the Arabs accepted, as the Prophet had accepted, the institution of Slavery as part of the natural order of things, they seem to have felt uneasy about it. It is significant that the formal liberation of a slave was commended by the Koran as a meritorious act and was often effected by the master on his death-bed.<sup>4</sup> Some observers thought that the Arabs were

<sup>1</sup> Sullivan, 168-9. Rigby described the capture of a dhow by H.M.S. *Lyra* with 112 girls on board. The effluvium was so bad that 'each man, as he went into the hold of the dhow, fainted'. The doctor believed that in another week the whole 'cargo' would have died. 1871 *Committee*, Q. 562. Churchill mentioned a case of eleven slaves dying of starvation after only eight or ten days' voyage: *ibid.*, Q. 310.

<sup>2</sup> Vivian, *ibid.*, Q. 33. Colomb, 49-55.

<sup>3</sup> Usually, but not always. Many stories of brutal treatment of slaves were current in Pemba, and the Arabs of Malindi, like some West Indian planters, were said to think it paid to work their slaves to death and get quick profits. *Correspondence respecting Slavery in the Zanzibar Dominions, Africa*, no. 7 (1896), 42.

<sup>4</sup> For an interesting discussion of this point by the Rev. G. P. Badger and Seyyid Barghash, see *Correspondence on Sir Bartle Frere's Mission* (P.P. 1873. lxi), 51.

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too indolent or apathetic to drive their slaves hard; but, whatever the reason, it seems clear that an Arab's slaves were better off on the whole than a European's slaves across the Atlantic or in the Mascarenes. Rigby never minimised or palliated the evils of the slave-system, but he admitted that the slaves on the Zanzibar plantations led 'an easy life'. They had fair-sized huts and gardens of their own, and on two days in each week they were free to do as they pleased and could sell their own produce in the market. If they were hired out to another employer, they were allowed to retain three-eighths of their wages. Some of them acquired a good deal of money and bought slaves of their own. But that there was something wrong with their conditions of life is clear from the high rate of mortality and the low rate of fertility. Rigby thought that probably not more than five per cent. of the women bore children.<sup>1</sup>

### 4

One of the chief difficulties in coping with the British Slave Trade was that it paid so well. It was in its prime the most lucrative of all branches of overseas commerce. It radiated wealth from the seaports on which it was based, and constituted a formidable vested interest. It was the same with the Arab Slave Trade. It paid the Arab raiders and smugglers, it paid the Indian merchants who supplied the caravans, it paid the Sultan.

Most of the profit accrued to the first of these beneficiaries—the caravan leaders going inland from Zanzibar and elsewhere on the coast. Some of their slaves, as has been seen, they got for nothing by kidnapping or raiding on their own; and most of them cost no more than a few yards of cloth apiece. The price of an adult slave in the Zanzibar market at this period was £4 to £5. There were payments, of course, and losses on the debit side—the cost of the caravan, the dhow and the food, the death of many slaves on the journey by land and sea, and the customs duty: but the clear profit has been reckoned at over 60 per cent., and to this was often added the profit on the ivory which, especially near Lake Tanganyika, was sought as eagerly and bought

<sup>1</sup> Rigby, Report, 1860: Russell, 334. Similar evidence, Churchill, 1871 *Committee*, Q. 288, 325-32; Devereux, 107; Steere, 1871 *Committee*, Q. 1004-6.

as cheaply as slaves. The northward smugglers may not have done quite so well. They had no share in the ivory trade; and, though the price of slaves at Muscat and other ports on the Arabian coast was as high as from £13 to £20, the mortality on the longer voyage was often heavier, and there was risk of losing a dhow and all its cargo if caught by a British cruiser.<sup>1</sup>

No estimate can be made of the profit which the 'banyans' made from the Trade. It must be taken for granted that it was substantial since they were the only bankers and merchants available for financing caravans and stocking them.<sup>2</sup> But for the gain to the Sultan's revenues various rough figures are available. At the height of his prosperous reign Said obtained well over £10,000 a year from the duty on slaves.<sup>3</sup> In 1845, indeed, he declared, with some natural exaggeration, no doubt, that the part of the Trade to be abolished by the projected Treaty was alone worth to him £8,000 or £10,000 a year.<sup>4</sup> In 1871 the reckoning of the Foreign Office, based on Kirk's careful estimate, was that the annual proceeds of the slave tax in the last few years averaged about £20,000 or roughly one quarter of the Sultan's income.<sup>5</sup>

## 5

Most of these facts about the Arab Slave Trade were revealed to the British public by the explorers' accounts of their travels and particularly by the books, letters and speeches of Livingstone. When Livingstone returned from his crossing of Africa in 1857 and began to preach his crusade against the Arab Trade, public interest in the fate of Africa, which had been fairly steadily maintained for a generation after 1807, had lost much of its old fervour. The disastrous Niger Expedition of 1841 had

<sup>1</sup> Prices and profits. Vivian, *1871 Committee*, Q. 38, 39. Rigby, *ibid.*, Q. 560, 565. Colomb, 55-9. See also *East Africa and its Invaders*, 517.

<sup>2</sup> See chap. X below.

<sup>3</sup> *East Africa and its Invaders*, 318.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 509, 516.

<sup>5</sup> Vivian, *1871 Committee*, Q. 37, 99-104: cf. text, vi and viii. On slaves imported at Zanzibar the duty was 2 dollars (about 9 shillings) if they came from Kilwa. According to custom,  $\frac{1}{2}$  dollar out of this was given to the dhow owner, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  to the 'head man' or local authorities at Kilwa. This deduction was not made on the 2 dollar duty on slaves imported from other places on the coast than Kilwa. On slaves exported from Zanzibar the duty was 2 dollars without deduction. Kirk to Granville, 25. i. 72: F.O. 84. 1357.

had a damping effect. Buxton had died in 1845, and there had been no one to succeed him in the leadership of the humanitarian movement as worthily as he had succeeded Wilberforce. Between 1850 and 1860, moreover, it seemed that the trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, with which public opinion was almost exclusively concerned, was nearing its end. By 1865 it had almost ceased. But the disclosures of Livingstone and his fellow-explorers showed that the task of rescuing Tropical Africa from the Slave Trade would be only half fulfilled when it disappeared from the Atlantic. While it was dying on the west coast, it was growing on the east—growing so fast that, if it were not checked, it would soon spread across the continent into the areas once exploited from the Atlantic side. Livingstone penetrated to the Upper Congo almost on the heels of the first Arab ‘slavers’ from Ujiji. Thus, it fell to Livingstone to do what Wilberforce had done to inform and inflame the conscience of the British people. It was again a cumulative process. The popular enthusiasm of 1857 was kindled more by Livingstone’s personality and the romance of exploration than by his denunciation of the Slave Trade. But in the course of his last long journey, as has been observed, his appeals to his fellow-countrymen at home were more and more concentrated, as he saw more and more of what was happening in Africa, on the single issue of the Trade. It was at that time, as Sir Bartle Frere put it, that ‘his descriptions of the horrors of the Slave Trade in the interior really took hold upon the mind of the people of this country’.<sup>1</sup>

There was one great difference between Livingstone’s crusade and Wilberforce’s. Wilberforce had to overcome a powerful and persistent opposition; but the Arab Slave Trade, unlike the British, had no defenders. No British planters could clamour for its continuance, now that Slavery itself was gone from British soil. No British vested interest in its profits was at stake. There was no need, therefore, for large-scale agitation such as Wilberforce and his allies conducted. The Anti-Slavery Society urged the Government to adopt more drastic measures to suppress the Trade in an address to Lord Stanley in 1868 and by a deputation to Lord Granville in 1872; and it held two well-attended public meetings at the Mansion House in 1872;<sup>2</sup> but there was

<sup>1</sup> Speech at Glasgow, Nov. 10, 1876: Blaikie, 318.

<sup>2</sup> *Anti-Slavery Reporter*, Series iii, vol. xvi, 61–2; vol. xviii, 61, 66.

no campaign in the provinces, no canvassing, no 'monster' petitions to the House of Commons.<sup>1</sup> In Parliament, similarly, there was nothing like the historic debates on the British Trade. The subject of the Arab Trade, indeed, could scarcely be debated when all were agreed in condemning it. Speeches were made from time to time in both Houses arising out of questions as to the efficacy of the methods adopted for the suppression of the Trade, speeches which dwelt on its iniquities—with a reference as a rule to Livingstone's account of them—on the 'thousands of deserted villages', on the tens of thousands of Africans 'carried off by the man-hunters', on Britain's duty to maintain her humanitarian tradition. But these speeches were unanswered. Nobody could palliate the case against the Trade. And controversy as to methods of repression was stilled by the appointment of a Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1871.<sup>2</sup>

There was no division, finally, in the Cabinet such as had obstructed the abolition of the British Trade until the very eve of its achievement. Ministers needed no spur from Parliament or the public to press their attack on the Trade. For Palmerston in particular, who was Prime Minister from 1855 to 1858 and again from 1859 till his death in 1865, it was an old and congenial task. As Foreign Secretary from 1830 to 1841 and from 1846 to 1851 he had been mainly responsible for the operation of the 'coercive policy' on both sides of the Atlantic; and whether in attacking the Trade or in defending his measures against it, he had been at his best; for the stark cruelty of the Trade seems to have stirred in him, as in so many other Englishmen of his day and his father's, an almost passionate desire to destroy it. The most characteristic expression of his feeling may be found in a passage of the great speech he made on the theme in 1844, the text of which was the fact that no less than 150,000 Africans were still being smuggled over the Atlantic in a year.

'Consider [he said] what an enormous mass of people that represents and what an extent of ground they would cover. . . . Let anyone imagine that he saw 150,000 human beings drawn up on a great plain and that he was told as they marched past

<sup>1</sup> There was a meeting at Norwich to protest against the Trade on Jan. 16, 1873: *The Times*, 17. i. 73.

<sup>2</sup> *Hansard*, clxiv (1861), 875; clxxi (1863), 976; ccvii (1871), 957; ccxii (1872), 1608-20.

him that they were all travelling to the same doom; that this vast living mass of fellow-creatures was driven on to suffer painful and premature death under every variety of bodily and mental torture. Let him further fancy himself told that this was not a single or an accidental calamity, but that every succeeding year the same ground would again be trodden by the same number of victims hurried forward to the same melancholy fate. . . . If this has been going on for the last century, how many millions must have been swept away from the population of Africa! I will venture to say that, if all the other crimes which the human race has committed were added together, they could not exceed the amount of guilt incurred in connexion with this diabolical Slave Trade. Is it not then the duty of every government and of every nation, on whom Providence has bestowed the means of putting an end to this crime, to employ those means to the greatest possible extent?"<sup>1</sup>

Palmerston was no less concerned with the Arab than with the European Slave Trade. Just before he left the Foreign Office in 1841, he had raised the question of negotiating a further limitation of the Trade at Zanzibar, and just after he returned there in 1846, the outcome of those negotiations, the Treaty of 1845, came into operation. He was keenly interested in its working, and, when he received a pessimistic report from Hamerton, he drafted a typically outspoken reply. 'You will take every opportunity of impressing upon these Arabs that the nations of Europe are destined to put an end to the African Slave Trade, and that Great Britain is the main instrument in the hand of Providence for the accomplishment of this purpose: that it is vain for these Arabs to endeavour to resist the consummation of that which is written in the book of fate.'<sup>2</sup>

If to Palmerston belonged the political leadership of the crusade, he had associates and successors scarcely less determined to attain its end. The ministers primarily concerned with the subject in this period were Lord John Russell as Palmerston's Foreign Secretary (1859-1865) and his successor as Prime Minister (1865-1866), Lord Derby as Prime Minister with Lord Stanley, his eldest son, as his Foreign Secretary (1866-

<sup>1</sup> *Hansard*, lxxvi (1844), 924-5, 931. For a brief account of the 'coercive system', see *The British Anti-Slavery Movement*, chap. vi.

<sup>2</sup> *East Africa and its Invaders*, 517-19.

1868), Gladstone as Prime Minister (1868-1874), Lord Clarendon as Foreign Secretary (1865-1866 and 1868-1870), and Lord Granville as Foreign Secretary (1870-1874). Three of these had been concerned in their younger days with the third great achievement of the British humanitarian movement—the abolition of Slavery in the British Colonies. Derby as Colonial Secretary was himself responsible for preparing the bill in 1833 and fought it through the Commons. Russell was his colleague in the Government at that time, and proved his constancy to the African cause by stoutly supporting Palmerston's defence of the 'coercive system'. In 1849, indeed, when he was Prime Minister, and a motion was proposed recommending the first steps towards the withdrawal of the naval patrol, he called a meeting of his party and told it that, if the motion were carried, he would resign. Gladstone, it is true, in the course of his first session in the Commons, had criticised the bill of 1833; but he deplored in later years the 'real illiberalism' of that youthful attitude and welcomed the 'enormous and most blessed change of opinion since that day on the subject of Negro slavery'.<sup>1</sup> Clarendon had no 'past' in the matter; but he was one of Livingstone's warmest champions and the Zambesi Expedition was mainly his doing.

Thus the attack on the Arab Slave Trade was strongly manned in London. And British ministers could rely on the whole-hearted co-operation of the authorities in India who shared with them the management of British policy in the Indian Ocean. The facts of the East African Slave Trade, declared the Government of Bombay in 1861, 'will convince the British Government, which has ever been the chief instrument by which Providence has curbed this inhuman traffic, that its work is not yet completed and that a great evil has still to be encountered and subdued.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Morley, *Life of Gladstone* (1st ed., London, 1903), i. 104.

<sup>2</sup> Resolution of March 28, 1861: *1871 Committee*, 124.

# VIII

## THE POLICY OF RESTRICTION

(1856-1873)

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### I

Up to 1873 the method by which the British Government attacked the Arab Slave Trade was the method of restriction. It was an attempt to confine the Trade within the narrowest practicable limits by action both in the area from which the slaves came and in the area to which they went.

In the first place, treaties for the suppression of the Trade were negotiated with the governments of the countries into which the slaves were imported—with the Shah of Persia in 1851, with the Arab chiefs on the west coast of the Persian Gulf in 1820, 1838 and 1839, with the Chief of Sohar in 1849, with the Somali Sheikhs in the neighbourhood of Berbera in 1856, and with King Radama of Madagascar in 1817, 1820 and 1823.<sup>1</sup> In the period about to be examined further treaties or engagements were made with the rulers of Sheher and Makalla on the South Arabian coast in 1863<sup>2</sup> and with the Queen of Madagascar in 1865.<sup>3</sup> No treaties were needed for India. The British Abolition Acts of 1807 and 1811 covered, the first by implication, the second explicitly, the importation of slaves into British India, and firm pressure from Bombay in 1835 and 1836 induced the protected Chiefs of Kathiawar and Cutch similarly to prohibit importation.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Texts of most of these treaties are given in *1871 Committee*, 98-103. For the others, see *East Africa and its Invaders*, 198-200, 503.

<sup>2</sup> Coghlan to G. of B., 18. v. 63: *S.P.* liv (1863-4), 436-8.

<sup>3</sup> Vivian, *1871 Committee*, Q. 173. Text, p. 105.

<sup>4</sup> *East Africa and its Invaders*, 205-6, 501.



Secondly, successive efforts were made to restrict the Trade at its export end—the East African coast, and primarily that part of it which was under the overlordship of Seyyid Said and his successors. As has been stated in Chapter I, Said was induced to conclude two restrictive treaties. Under that of 1822 he undertook to prohibit the Trade outside his African and Asiatic dominions. Under that of 1845 he limited it to the coast-trade between Zanzibar and his other African towns and islands.<sup>1</sup> This second treaty was the legal basis on which the policy of restriction rested from 1847 to 1873. Its terms were as follows:

‘I. His Highness the Sultan of Muscat hereby engages to prohibit, under the severest penalties, the export of slaves from his African dominions, and to issue orders to his officers to prevent and suppress such trade.

‘II. His Highness the Sultan of Muscat further engages to prohibit, under the severest penalties, the importation of slaves from any part of Africa into his possessions in Asia, and to use his utmost influence with all the chiefs of Arabia, the Red Sea, and the Persian Gulf, in like manner to prevent the introduction of slaves from Africa into their respective territories.

‘III. His Highness the Sultan of Muscat grants to the ships of Her Majesty’s navy, as well as those of the East India Company, permission to seize and confiscate any vessels the property of His Highness or of his subjects carrying on Slave Trade, excepting such only as are engaged in the transport of slaves from one part to another of his own dominions in Africa, between the port of Lamu to the north, and its dependencies, the northern limit of which is the north point of Kiwayu Island, in 1° 57’ south latitude, and the port of Kilwa to the south, and its dependencies, the southern limit of which is the Songo Mnara or Pagoda Point, in 9° 2’ south latitude, including the islands of Zanzibar, Pemba and Mafia.

‘IV. This agreement to commence and have effect from the 1st day of January, 1847, of the year of Christ, and the 15th day of the month of Moharram, 1263, of the Hejira.’<sup>2</sup>

That this Treaty left the Trade within Said’s African dominions undisturbed was emphasised by an ‘additional

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 10–13, above, and for fuller treatment, *East Africa and its Invaders*, 210–16, 505–16.

<sup>2</sup> *S.P.* xxv (1846–7), 632–3.

article' which provided that ships belonging to Said or his subjects were not to be searched for slaves between Kilwa and Lamu.<sup>1</sup>

There were precedents for a treaty restricting rather than abolishing the Slave Trade. The Anglo-Portuguese Treaty of 1815 confined the Trade to shipment from Angola and Mozambique to Brazil. The Anglo-Spanish Treaty of 1817 similarly limited the Trade to the south of the Equator. But later treaties with Portugal and Spain, like those with France, were based on the complete outlawing of the Trade. It was obvious, indeed, that, as long as any shipment of slaves at all was legitimate, the task of preventing smuggling was greatly handicapped; and this was as true on the Indian Ocean as on the Atlantic. Why, then, did not British Governments insist at the outset on the entire abolition of the Arab Slave Trade? Why did they acquiesce in restriction? The answer is clear. If every slave dhow on the water were outside the law, and the law were duly executed, the oversea supply of slaves would cease. Only the Arabs living on the African mainland would still get their slaves from the interior. Zanzibar, Pemba, and the other smaller islands off the coast would be deprived of them. And since Slavery, even under relatively humane conditions, seems always or almost always to have required for its maintenance a constant intake of new slaves—the low fertility of the slaves of Zanzibar has been noted in the preceding chapter—that meant the end of Slavery itself on those islands. At each stage of the British campaign this implication had been recognised. Said himself had explained in 1822 that he could accept only a restrictive, not a wholly prohibitive, treaty. 'The reason', he said, 'is as clear as the sun and moon.' And he had received a reassuring reply: 'It is not the practice of Slavery or the disposal of slaves in your own dominions that is in question. It is the slave traffic for exportation alone which it is our object to annihilate.' Again, in negotiating the Treaty of 1845, Said had insisted on retaining 'the free sale and transit' of slaves between Zanzibar and his other

<sup>1</sup> It was only the export of slaves out of his African dominions that Said undertook to prohibit, not their importation into them. He desired in particular to maintain his supply of girl slaves and eunuchs from Abyssinia, and to that end another 'additional article' precluded the searching of ships bound for Arab East Africa from the Red Sea or Arabian Sea. *East Africa and its Invaders*, 515.

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African ports, in order, as he explicitly stated, to keep Slavery alive on the islands.<sup>1</sup>

### 2

The execution of the Treaty of 1845 depended on two factors—first, the Sultan's prohibition of the Trade within the limits of restriction 'under the severest penalties'; secondly, the seizure of ships carrying slaves in defiance of the Sultan's orders. How did these two factors operate?

The first was by no means ineffectual as long as Said lived. Though the concessions he had made to British feeling had been deeply resented by his subjects and seriously reduced his revenue, he honourably maintained them. He duly proclaimed the restriction of the Trade to his African dominions; he applied the 'severest penalties' to those of his subjects who were convicted of disobeying him; he did not try to obstruct the work of the British patrol. The result was not unsatisfactory. Slave smuggling became a far more hazardous pursuit than it had ever been before. Hamerton, indeed, believed in 1850 that its volume had been cut down by as much as 80 per cent.<sup>2</sup> But there was still, when Said died, a steady flow of slaves to South Arabia and the Persian Gulf, either openly exported from Zanzibar to one of Said's northern ports, as permitted by the Treaty, and thence smuggled across the Gulf of Aden, or secretly carried off from Kilwa or from Zanzibar itself by 'Northern Arabs' in defiance of an authority they did not pretend to respect.

It was practically inevitable that this smuggling should increase after Said's death. For the reasons given in Chapter II it was impossible for Majid, at any rate in the early years of his reign, to do what his father had done. Even Rigby, whose opinion of Majid's character has been recorded, could make allowances. 'However desirous [he wrote] the Sultan may be to fulfil his treaty engagements and put a stop to this traffic, he has in reality no power. No one in his service will carry out any orders he may give on the subject. The public opinion of the Arabs is too strong in favour of it, and almost all the chief people in his dominions are either directly or indirectly concerned in it.'<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *East Africa and its Invaders*, 211-4, 513.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 517-20.

<sup>3</sup> Rigby's replies to Coghlan's queries, 5. x. 60: 1871 Committee, 121.

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Brigadier Coghlan fully confirmed this judgment from what he saw and heard on his visit to Zanzibar with the Arbitration Commission.<sup>1</sup> 'The Arabs to a man are more or less mixed up with the traffic.' The Sultan's advisers profited by it, and the 'banyan' customs-farmers clung to the two-dollar tax on every slave.<sup>2</sup> Coghlan, indeed, was convinced that the Trade could only be kept within the Treaty limits by British cruisers, and convinced, too, at this early stage, that their patrol could only be really effective if all shipment of slaves by sea were forbidden.<sup>3</sup> After studying Coghlan's full report the Government of Bombay concurred on both points. 'It is too much to expect a chief with a disputed title, who must therefore endeavour to conciliate his subjects, sternly to oppose a system from which he derives a considerable portion of his revenue when every man around him is a slave crimp or a slave broker.' And they recommended the negotiation of a new treaty with the Sultan under which 'all export and import of slaves within the Zanzibar dominions should be prohibited'.<sup>4</sup> The Foreign Office was of the same mind. A few weeks before Sir George Clerk and his colleagues passed their resolution at Bombay, Lord John Russell wrote to Rigby instructing him to propose another 'additional article' to the Treaty prohibiting the coastwise trade in slaves between the Sultan's African ports, including Zanzibar, since 'so long as this coast traffic is permitted to continue, it will be impossible for the Sultan's officers or for the commanders of British cruisers to prevent slaves from being exported from the Zanzibar territory'.<sup>5</sup> Already, then, in 1861, the British Government had very little confidence in the policy of restriction.

Majid, of course, rejected the proposal as Said had rejected it in his day. 'These countries cannot do without slaves: they differ from other countries.'<sup>6</sup> A year later, Russell told Rigby's acting successor, Colonel Pelly, to repeat the proposal and to remind the Sultan that the continuance of the coastwise Trade was responsible for the 'raids made by slave hunters on peaceable and unoffending towns and villages at a great sacrifice of

<sup>1</sup> September, 1860: see p. 26, above.

<sup>2</sup> Coghlan to G. of B., I. xi. 60: *1871 Committee*, 116.

<sup>3</sup> Coghlan to G. of B., I. xi. 60: *ibid.*, 118.

<sup>4</sup> Resolution, 28. iii. 61: *ibid.*, 124.

<sup>5</sup> Russell to Rigby, 19. ii. 61: *S.P.* lii (1861-2), 680-1.

<sup>6</sup> Sultan to Rigby, 25. vii. 61: *ibid.*, 693.

human life'.<sup>1</sup> But Majid was quite immovable. 'It is too much to expect that I should agree to a measure which must certainly prove my ruin.' And Playfair, now in Pelly's place, was inclined to assent. 'It is for Her Majesty's Government to consider', he wrote, 'whether a measure should be forced on the Sultan which must inevitably cause the downfall of his House.'<sup>2</sup> Inevitably? In the light of after events this warning note seems a little too loud, but the Foreign Office could not ignore it. The obnoxious proposal was put to Majid once again when Churchill followed Playfair, but with due moderation; there were no threats behind it. Naturally, therefore, when Majid died, the policy was still restriction and no more.

If they hesitated to go beyond restriction, the British Government were determined at least to get all that restriction could give; and the language used in insisting on Majid's loyalty to the Treaty was less restrained. He must be told, said Russell, when he heard in 1862 that the Trade was still increasing, that, if he did not fulfil his obligations, the British Government would be 'reluctantly obliged to compel him'.<sup>3</sup> By that time Majid's personal position at Zanzibar was more secure; and whether he believed that Russell was in earnest or whether he realised that it was the only way to save what remained of the Trade, he made several genuine attempts to render the Treaty more effective. Whereas in the preceding years the 'Northern Arabs' had been allowed to buy slaves freely in the Zanzibar slave market<sup>4</sup>—which could only be for export to the north in violation of the Treaty—he issued a proclamation in 1862, forbidding 'Northern Arabs' to buy slaves or ship them from Zanzibar at all and imprisoned three parties of them who defied it.<sup>5</sup> In 1863 he was equally rigorous. Some of the miscreants were killed in resisting arrest by his 'Baluchis', others were flogged or imprisoned, and more than 300 slaves which they had bought or kidnapped were taken from them.<sup>6</sup> This kidnapping was a new expedient to which the 'Northern Arabs' had been driven by the prohibition of purchase; and Playfair reported a peculiarly

<sup>1</sup> R. to P., 7. vi. 62: *S.P.* liii (1862-3), 1334-5.

<sup>2</sup> Playfair to G. of B., 23. v. 63: *S.P.* liv (1863-4), 427.

<sup>3</sup> F.O. to Pelly, 1. x. 62: *S.P.* liii (1862-3), 1336.

<sup>4</sup> Rigby to G. of B., 14. v. 61: *S.P.* lii (1861-2), 689.

<sup>5</sup> Pelly to G. of B., 8. iii. 62: *S.P.* liii (1862-3), 1333.

<sup>6</sup> Playfair to G. of B., 23. v. 63: *S.P.* liv (1863-4), 426.

atrocious incident such as occurred often enough on the slave-routes on the mainland but could scarcely be tolerated at Zanzibar. When H.M.S. *Orestes* caught a small boat owned by Jawasmi and bound for the Persian Gulf with 64 slaves on board, it was found that most of them had been stolen from their owners in Zanzibar. One had belonged to a respectable Arab townsman, and had been seized and gagged on his way home from market. A fellow-slave, who was with him, resisted, and 'was on this account mercilessly murdered in the presence of numerous witnesses, and his body was cut in pieces and thrown into a cesspool.'<sup>1</sup> More drastic measures were clearly needed, and Majid issued two further proclamations to take effect on January 1, 1864. The first was in these terms:

'Know that we have ordained that no owners of boats shall transport slaves in their boats from any part of our dominions during the 'monsoon' [i.e. from January 1 to May 1].'

The second was as follows:

'We have ordered all our subjects not to rent their houses to the people of the north employed in stealing slaves.'<sup>2</sup>

The first of these measures was a notable concession on Majid's part; for it meant that even the coastwise shipment of slaves, legitimate at any time under the Treaty, would now be outlawed during the four months in which the south-west 'monsoon' enabled the 'Northern Arabs' to smuggle their booty over the Arabian Sea. 'Every boat found by our cruisers with slaves on board', wrote Playfair, 'will be a legal capture.'<sup>2</sup>

For four years Majid took no further action, but in the winter of 1867-8 part of the British naval patrol was withdrawn, and in consequence a far greater number of 'Northern Arabs' than usual descended on Zanzibar. Majid's authority was openly defied. The buying as well as the stealing of slaves was resumed. In March 1868, accordingly, the last and most stringent of Majid's decrees was issued. Any ship caught carrying slaves

<sup>1</sup> P. to G. of B., 20. viii. 63: *ibid.*, 429. The Jawasmi were imprisoned. Majid at first declared that he would execute the one who had actually committed the murder; but as Moslem law did not prescribe capital punishment for the murder of a slave by a free man, he did not carry out this intention.

<sup>2</sup> P. to G. of B., 15. vi. 63: *S.P.* liv (1863-4), 430. P. to G. of B., 4. i. 64 (with texts of proclamations, translated from the Arabic), *S.P.* lv (1864-5), 1146.

anywhere along the coast during the 'monsoon' would be burned. Any subject of the Sultan's convicted of sharing in the slave traffic with Arabia would be fined and exiled from Zanzibar. Any person selling slaves to 'Northern Arabs' would be fined and imprisoned for two months, and any person keeping slaves in hiding for 'Northern Arabs' would be fined. Further provisions regulated the procedure in the slave market to prevent sale to any 'foreign' Arab. Finally, Majid wrote to the sheikhs of the Arabian coast, warning them that 'in future every northern dhow reaching Zanzibar shall be burned forthwith, as their sole business here is to steal the children of the inhabitants of Zanzibar and their slaves.'<sup>1</sup>

It seems, then, that, once he was firmly on his throne, Majid honestly did his best. Rigby distrusted him, Churchill trusted him, and probably both were right.<sup>2</sup> It is hard, indeed, to see what more Majid could have done in the second half of his reign. And yet all he did was not enough. One reason was the familiar difficulty of enforcing any laws which have outrun the advance of public opinion. Respectable Arabs at Zanzibar might profess to regard slave smuggling as a disreputable pursuit;<sup>3</sup> but members of the Sultan's family and court engaged in it,<sup>4</sup> and, however much the 'Northern Arabs' might be disliked and feared, it was not easy to refuse a surreptitious deal if the price were high enough. But the major reason for the ineffectiveness of Majid's orders was his inability to enforce them. His only police force was his meagre and not very trustworthy 'Baluchi' garrison, and the pirates of the Arabian coast, as European seafarers had learned to their cost in the old days, were savage and murderous folk. The 'Baluchis' were none too anxious to interfere with them, and they were powerless in face

<sup>1</sup> Churchill to G. of B., with English copy of decree, 9. iv. 68; Majid to Churchill, 3. v. 68; *S.P.* lix (1868-9), 1083-6.

<sup>2</sup> Churchill's confidence wavered at times. In March 1868 he wrote: 'To please H.M.G. some show of obstruction is made by the Sultan but it is not serious.' But in April he wrote: 'Seyyid Majid shows himself ready to punish the Arabs he detects engaged in the Trade, whether they be his own subjects or those of the Sultan of Oman.' C. to G. of B., 4. iii. and 9. iv. 68; *S.P.* lix (1868-9), 1079, 1083.

<sup>3</sup> Bishop Steere, 1871 *Committee, Q.* 1064.

<sup>4</sup> 'His Highness' brothers and sisters run slaves, and his courtiers are all involved in the trade.' Churchill to G. of B., 4. iii. 68; *S.P.* lix (1868-9), 1079.

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of the numbers that came to Zanzibar in that winter of 1867-8. Churchill reported that a company of 150 'Baluchis', sent to rescue slaves collected by the 'Northern Arabs' in a certain part of the town, was contemptuously and successfully defied. On another occasion the 'Baluchis' watched a faction fight among the Northerners in which some twenty of the combatants and at least one bystander were killed, and dared not intervene.<sup>1</sup> And, if it was difficult for the Sultan to enforce his will at Zanzibar, it was well-nigh impossible at the coast towns. Kirk pointed out in 1872—and it was as true of Majid as of Barghash—that the Sultan was only acknowledged on the mainland 'as a distant feudal lord whose direct interference in local affairs is unknown'. 'Thus from the southern limit of the Sultan's dominions at Cape Delgado to Kilwa, a coastline of 200 miles, intersected everywhere by creeks and possessing several fine harbours, the Zanzibar Government was represented last year by only ten soldiers and by one or two customs agents, any one or all of whom would connive for a few dollars at the shipment of slaves. From this region, presenting so many facilities, being close to the line of slave caravans, several cargoes have this year been shipped without paying the tax in any shape; and slaves there purchased for 8 to 10 dollars have been sold at Barawa at from 30 to 45 dollars each. From Kilwa itself it is probable that many slaves are taken to Barawa and other northern ports.'<sup>2</sup>

It was much the same at sea. Majid's navy, as has been observed, was more formidable in theory than in practice; and it seems to have played little, if any, part in the pursuit and seizure of slave-smugglers. Even in Zanzibar harbour its efficiency was questionable. Rigby once suggested to Majid that the dhows in port should be regularly inspected to see if they were taking slaves on board, and Majid gave orders to that effect to the commander of one of his ships. A few days later the commander, who had been educated (notes Rigby) in England, called at the consulate and explained that he had that morning pulled alongside a dhow which was packed with slaves and had been driven off with billets of wood. On his return with thirty 'Baluchis', the boat had been fired on by the crew of the dhow

<sup>1</sup> C. to G. of B., 9. ix. 68: *S.P.* lix (1868-9), 1083-4.

<sup>2</sup> Kirk to Granville, 25. i. 72: *F.O.* 84. 1357.



and upset and its occupants forced to swim ashore. 'I have had enough of visiting slave dhows,' said the commander.<sup>1</sup>

In fact, the execution of the Treaty on the water was virtually left to British ships in accordance with Article III. If the British navy could stop slave-smuggling beyond the Treaty limits, *then* Majid's prohibition could be enforced, however weak his own authority, *then* the Trade could really be restricted.

3

In the period under review—from 1856 to 1873—the squadron of the British navy charged with the task of preventing slave-smuggling in the Western Indian Ocean consisted normally of seven or eight small cruisers carrying sails as well as steam-power. They were stationed as a rule at intervals along the African and Arabian coasts to watch both the area of export between Zanzibar and Barawa and the area of import between the mouths of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. In shallow waters close inshore, pinnaces and boats were launched to aid a cruiser in cutting off a dhow. Boats, manned by twenty or thirty men, might be away from their mother-ships for days or even weeks, examining the creeks and inlets of the African coast.<sup>2</sup>

From April till October, i.e. during the south-west 'monsoon', at which period alone the northward voyage could be made by sailing ships, the squadron was busily occupied in stopping and searching dhows.<sup>3</sup> Far the greater number of them were allowed to continue on their course either because they were found to be engaged in lawful business or because the proof of their lawlessness was not sufficient. In the spring of 1870 out of over 400 dhows examined only 11 were condemned as 'slavers'.<sup>4</sup> Sometimes a 'slaver' quietly surrendered, sometimes it resisted search and was stormed by a boarding party.<sup>5</sup> If there were any chance of escape—and with a good wind or towards

<sup>1</sup> Rigby's replies to Coghlan's queries, 5. x. 60: 1871 *Committee*, 122.

<sup>2</sup> Evidence of Rear-Admiral C. F. Hillyar and Sir L. G. Heath before the Committee of 1871: Q. 1137-41, 1177-81; Q. 673, 765-7.

<sup>3</sup> There was less traffic in July and August: Heath, *ibid.*, Q. 683.

<sup>4</sup> Heath, *ibid.*, Q. 685.

<sup>5</sup> For a lively account of a boarding, see W. C. Devereux (who was Assistant Pay-Master on three ships of the patrol), *A Cruise in the Gorgon*, 88-9.

nightfall there was often a chance—it might run for it. One case at least is on record of the smugglers, when they were being overhauled, cutting the slaves' throats and throwing them overboard<sup>1</sup> but if, as usual, they were not far from the coast, they generally tried to avoid capture by running the dhow ashore. When it grounded, the slaves were compelled, by threat of instant death or fear of what they were told the 'white men' would do to them if they were caught, to leap into the surf and make for the beach.<sup>2</sup> In rough weather some of them might be drowned, and, if the landing were made on a solitary stretch of the hot bare Somali or Arabian coast, the fate of the survivors, without food or water, may well have been worse.<sup>3</sup> When a slave dhow was captured intact, the Admiralty instructions required that, unless it were 'not in a sufficiently seaworthy conditions', it should be taken for adjudication to the nearest port at which an Admiralty or Vice-Admiralty Court was established.<sup>4</sup> For most of the period this meant Aden or the Cape; but in 1866 the British consul at Zanzibar was given the jurisdiction of a Vice-Admiralty Court for dealing with 'slavers' within the Sultan's dominions, and in 1869 this jurisdiction was extended by Act of Parliament to cover all 'slavers' in any place.<sup>5</sup> Many slave dhows were thus brought in and condemned in due form. But navigation on the African coast was never easy; the coal in cruisers' bunkers was limited and costly; dhows were so lightly built that, if towed for any distance against wind and current, they split and sank. Most 'slavers', therefore, were condemned on the sole authority of their captors and burnt or scuttled on the spot.<sup>6</sup> As in the West African service a bounty was paid by the Treasury on every condemned 'slaver'

<sup>1</sup> Devereux, 111.

<sup>2</sup> Captain G. L. Sullivan, *Dhow Chasing in Zanzibar Waters* (London, 1873), 163-4. Sullivan served on three ships on the coast between 1849 and 1868. Captain P. Colomb, *Slave Catching in the Indian Ocean* (London, 1873), 29, 246. Colomb commanded a cruiser on the patrol from 1862 to 1870. His book is far the most interesting and informative of the accounts published by sundry officers who served on the East India station. It is distinguished by a studied moderation which commands the reader's respect but seems sometimes a little overdone.

<sup>3</sup> Colomb, 239.

<sup>4</sup> Text of Instructions, 1871 *Committee*, 92.

<sup>5</sup> 32 and 33 Vict. cap. 75. Rothery to Otway, 23. viii. 69; S.P. lx (1869-70), 654-6. Vivian, 1871 *Committee*, Q. 59.

<sup>6</sup> Colomb, 74, and 1871 *Committee*, Q. 1221-2.

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and shared between officers and men.<sup>1</sup> Rescued slaves were taken on board the cruiser to Aden, whence they were shipped to Bombay where, if young enough, they were placed in the Nassick school, or to Zanzibar where the Universities' Mission took charge of the children, or to the Seychelles and Mauritius where they were entrusted for some years as apprentices to local planters. To return them to their homes in the far interior was obviously impossible.<sup>2</sup>

For the men engaged in it, this hunting for 'slavers' in East Africa was as unpleasant a form of naval service as in West Africa. Life on the cruisers was said to be 'fairly healthy on the whole', and away from the coast the heat and glare of the Arabian Sea were doubtless bearable; but it was agreed that three years of it was all most men could stand, 'perpetually in the sun and perpetually on the strain'.<sup>3</sup> The work in the boats was the worst of it. Sometimes they were away from their ships for as long as a month, often in rough water, with inadequate food and no medical attention, and sleeping among swarms of mosquitoes. Malaria was rife, and the boat crews were often 'absolute wrecks' when they got back aboard.<sup>4</sup> There was danger, too. Arab 'slavers' could fight desperately, and they sometimes outnumbered their pursuers by two to one. As other Europeans had found, a landing on the Somali coast might prove disastrous. In 1862 a boat's crew, going ashore for water near Cape Guardafui, were murdered to a man.<sup>5</sup> Such risks, however, were not greater, perhaps, than those encountered by sportsmen on the track of 'big game'; and it was the spice of danger, the excitement of the chase, the chance of a skirmish that gave occasional colour to an otherwise tedious business. 'Incessant boarding of dhows, constant and prolonged examina-

<sup>1</sup> The amount was 30 shillings per ton. For the origin of the bounty system, see H. C. Rotheby's evidence, 1871 *Committee*, Q. 849-51. See also Vivian, *ibid.*, Q. 59-65, and Colomb, Q. 78-83. Note the latter's statement (83): 'Most commanders on the East India Station would, I imagine, agree in believing with me that the money value of the rewards for activity in suppressing the East African Slave Trade would never of itself induce any naval officer to undertake the arduous and unpleasant duty.'

<sup>2</sup> Vivian, *ibid.*, Q. 67-74, 82.

<sup>3</sup> Frere, *ibid.*, Q. 524. Heath, *ibid.*, Q. 677. Colomb, *ibid.*, Q. 1216, 1308.

<sup>4</sup> Hillyar, *ibid.*, Q. 1162. Devereux, 115.

<sup>5</sup> Devereux, 116, 355-6.

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tions generally resulting in acquittal. Perpetual rushing to sea at all hours of day and night. An eternal weighing and anchoring. Changing a dry boat's crew for a wet and exhausted one'—so the commander of H.M.S. *Dryad* described his work on patrol off the Arabian coast. 'The reader', he sums up, 'might think slave catching is all dash and excitement, whereas it is mainly drudgery and hard work.'<sup>1</sup>

Such was the effort made by the British navy in those years to execute the policy of restriction. It was a costly effort—in life and health and the burden it put on British and Indian taxpayers. And it failed. It was roughly reckoned that in the three years from 1867 to 1869, while 2,645 smuggled slaves were caught and freed, some 37,000 got safely oversea.<sup>2</sup>

There were various minor reasons for this failure. Seven or eight ships were not enough to blockade 4,000 miles of coast. Wind and current made it difficult to intercept a dhow on the northward voyage. Short service meant lack of experience in the commanding officers; and ignorance of the language and the untrustworthiness of interpreters made it difficult sometimes to detect or at least to prove that a smuggler was not a lawful trader. Arabs were permitted to take their 'domestic' slaves on board with them, and how could it be shown that they were not for sale? Or slaves intended for market might be set to work as members of the crew or even dressed up as half-caste passengers.<sup>3</sup> Whereas, moreover, on the Atlantic a 'slaver' was nothing but a 'slaver' and its track was not as a rule the normal track of lawful merchant ships, the dhows that issued from East African ports might be one or the other, or possibly both, with a cargo of rice and grain and coconuts as well as slaves.<sup>4</sup>

But those were all obstacles that might be overcome. The one insuperable difficulty was the existence of a legal and illegal Slave Trade side by side. As long as slaves could lawfully be shipped from port to port within the Sultan's dominions, it was virtually impossible, even with a fleet of cruisers, to prevent a smuggler slipping away to the north. And it was only, as has

<sup>1</sup> Colomb, 197, 233.

<sup>2</sup> 1871 Committee, text, vii.

<sup>3</sup> Heath, 1871 Committee, Q. 755. Churchill, *ibid.*, Q. 426. Colomb, 60. Sullivan, 60-5.

<sup>4</sup> Colomb, 452-3.

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been seen, for one period of eighteen months, from the spring of 1868 to the autumn of 1870, that such shipment of slaves was forbidden during the south-west 'monsoon'. The policy of restriction, in fact, defeated itself because it implied recognition. The continuance of the legal Trade prevented the stopping of the illegal.

### 4

At the time of Majid's death in 1870 the British Government were contemplating one more effort to get better results from the policy of restriction by making it more restrictive. The new engagements which first Churchill and then Kirk were instructed to press Barghash to undertake were a marked advance on the Treaty of 1845. It was proposed (1) that slaves should be shipped from one port only on the coast, Dar-es-Salaam; (2) that slaves so shipped should be taken only to Zanzibar, and re-shipped thence only to Pemba and Mombasa; (3) that the number of these slaves should be limited at first to the needs of the inhabitants and then decrease steadily to zero; (4) that every ship engaged in transporting slaves should be furnished with the Sultan's pass, valid only for one voyage; and (5) that the public slave-market at Zanzibar should be closed.<sup>1</sup>

Nothing came of these proposals. Barghash, as has been recorded in Chapter V, rejected them outright. Unless, therefore, the British Government were prepared to acquiesce in the smuggling overseas of at least 10,000 slaves a year, more drastic steps would have to be taken at Zanzibar. In the last resort the Sultan might have to be compelled to do what the British people wanted. With that eventuality in mind the Government wisely decided to obtain a mandate from the House of Commons. If a policy were to be enforced, it had better be the policy not merely of the Foreign Office but of Parliament. On July 6, 1871, accordingly, it was announced that a Select Committee had been appointed 'to inquire into the whole question of the Slave Trade on the East Coast of Africa, into the increased and increasing amount of that traffic, the particulars of existing Treaties and Agreements with the Sultan of Zanzibar upon the subject, and the possibility of putting an end entirely to the

<sup>1</sup> Vivian's evidence, *1871 Committee*, Q. 47.

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traffic in slaves by sea.' The Chairman was Mr. Russell Gurney, M.P. for Southampton and a member of the well-known Quaker family which had taken a prominent part in the humanitarian movement in the days of Wilberforce and Buxton. Among the other fourteen members were Lord Frederick Cavendish, Sir John Hay, Sir Robert Anstruther and Mr. Shaw Lefevre.<sup>1</sup>

Between July 10 and 25 the Committee took evidence from fourteen witnesses. Six of these were officials or ex-officials—Sir Bartle Frere, who had returned from his Governorship of Bombay to a seat on the India Council in 1867; Sir John Kaye, Secretary in the Political and Secret Department at the India Office; the Hon. C. Vivian, head of the Slave Trade department at the Foreign Office; Sir William Coghlan, K.C.B. as he now was, who could speak with authority on slave smuggling in the Arabian Sea, and, to provide closer personal knowledge of Zanzibar, Rigby, now a Major-General, and Churchill. The navy was represented by Rear-Admiral C. F. Hillyar and Admiral Sir Leopold Heath who had successively commanded the patrolling squadron from 1866 to 1870, and Captain P. Colomb who had served on it from 1868 to 1870. Mr. H. C. Rothery gave evidence as legal adviser to the Treasury on matters concerning the Slave Trade. The other four witnesses were missionaries—the Rev. Horace Waller and the Rev. C. A. Alington, who had served on the Universities' Mission, the Rev. E. Steere who had left it in 1868 but was to return to Zanzibar as its head in 1872, and Mr. E. Hutchison, one of the secretaries of the Church Missionary Society.

From these witnesses and from documentary material, including Kirk's dispatches from Zanzibar, the Committee were informed of the facts about the Arab Slave Trade and the failure of the policy of restriction to cope with it. Various suggestions were made by witnesses as to how slave smuggling might be more effectively suppressed. The admirals agreed that the patrol squadron should be increased to at least 10 or 12 ships.<sup>2</sup> Colomb thought that 6 or 8 of them should be concentrated off Ras el Hadd to watch the entry to the Persian Gulf.<sup>3</sup> Rigby wanted the Red Sea watched as well as the Gulf.<sup>4</sup> Frere contemplated a complete blockade of the African and

<sup>1</sup> *Hansard*, ccvii (1871), 957.

<sup>2</sup> *Q.* 1214.

<sup>3</sup> *Q.* 771-3, 1136, 1154-7.

<sup>4</sup> *Q.* 623.

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Arabian coast, requiring 30 to 40 ships.<sup>1</sup> It was also suggested that a cruiser or depot-ship should be permanently stationed at Zanzibar;<sup>2</sup> that the consul at Zanzibar should be a 'floating consul' with a yacht in which he would regularly visit the ports along the coast;<sup>3</sup> that the patrol ships should be steam gunboats or corvettes, and equipped with steam launches for work in-shore;<sup>4</sup> that smokeless fuel should be used;<sup>5</sup> that a much better class of interpreters should be provided;<sup>6</sup> and so forth. If such improvements were made, most of the witnesses agreed that smuggling could be practically ended, but only on one condition. All transport of slaves by sea must stop. A new Treaty must be concluded under which the sea-borne Trade would not merely be restricted but abolished.<sup>7</sup>

One witness propounded a still more drastic solution of the problem. Discussion of the best means of dealing with the slaves rescued from smugglers had led to the suggestion that a British settlement for their maintenance should be established on the African coast, and Waller had told the Committee that Kirk regarded the neighbourhood of Dar-es-Salaam as sufficiently healthy for the purpose.<sup>8</sup> This did not necessarily involve any territorial annexation, as Frere had sharply emphasised. 'I think care should be taken not to make it, if we can possibly avoid it, an English colony, but to make it a colony of English people, living under the flag of the Sultan, under his protection and under his guarantee, and watched over by English officials. That would get rid of a good many difficulties in the way of founding fresh colonies; and it would also insure the great object of all, namely, the Sultan being carried with us and the native authorities being carried with us in all that we do.'<sup>9</sup>

But that did not satisfy Admiral Heath. He had served, as it happened, on the West African coast when in 1861, solely because it was the only way of driving out the slave smugglers from the creeks and lagoons around it, Lagos was annexed. That drastic step, he declared, had had 'a very great effect' on the 'slavers', and it had been 'a great encouragement to legitimate trade'. The example should be followed in East Africa.

<sup>1</sup> Q. 490-1.

<sup>2</sup> Q. 186, 442: and Appendix, 117, 122.

<sup>3</sup> Q. 958.

<sup>4</sup> Q. 452, 748, 1017-23, 1089-90, 1167, 1214.

<sup>5</sup> Q. 1191-2.

<sup>6</sup> Q. 452, 480-1, 1124-5, 1252-4.

<sup>7</sup> Q. 573-80, 712, 722, 738, 960, 1218.

<sup>8</sup> Q. 974, 983: cf. Sullivan, 268.

<sup>9</sup> Q. 452.

'We must force the Government of Zanzibar', he had written in 1869, 'into active acquiescence in our views, and, if necessary, purchase or take possession of that island.' And now, in 1871, he went further. 'The only radical cure will be making Zanzibar a centre from which our British civilisation can radiate into that part of Africa.' Asked whether he contemplated a colony or a protectorate, he replied that that was for the Foreign Office to determine. Was physical force to be used? 'Moral force and money would suffice.'<sup>1</sup>

Heath was probably unaware that, nearly fifty years earlier, another naval officer had not only conceived the same idea of suppressing the Slave Trade in East Africa by hoisting the British flag there, but on his own initiative had put it into execution. In 1824 Captain W. F. Owen, engaged in a survey of the coast, had been asked by the Mazrui sheikhs who then ruled Mombasa to take their town and the dependent strip of coast-land down to Pangani under British protection. Their object was to ward off an attack by Seyyid Said who, as ruler of Oman, claimed the overlordship of Mombasa and was determined to enforce it as a necessary step to reviving the old Omani power all along the coast. Owen, who had been horrified by what he had seen of the Slave Trade to the southward, provisionally accepted the offer on condition that the Trade at Mombasa should be abolished; and a convention to that effect was signed, pending a final decision by the British Government. That decision annulled Owen's proceedings on the ground that they probably infringed the rights and certainly ran counter to the wishes of an Arab sovereign who had maintained friendly relations with British India since the critical days of the Napoleonic War. But the execution of this decision was delayed, and from February 1824 to July 1826 the British flag flew over Fort Jesus. Its little garrison consisted of a sergeant and half-a-dozen seamen and marines commanded first by a lieutenant of twenty-one and then in succession by two midshipmen acting as lieutenants. That flag and that force prevented 'slavers' using the port of Mombasa—there was no question then of a land-trade—for nearly thirty months.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Q. 711-4, 733-4, 739-40.

<sup>2</sup> A detailed account of 'Owen's Protectorate' is given in *East Africa and its Invaders*, chap. viii.



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Owen's idea was presently revived in more influential quarters. In 1838 Thomas Fowell Buxton, who was convinced that the Slave Trade could never be suppressed by naval action only, suggested to the Foreign Office that Said might be persuaded to cede or sell Mombasa to Britain as part of the commercial treaty which was then being negotiated. Glenelg supported the proposal, but Palmerston brusquely turned it down. What was the use, he asked, of one British colony on that long coast? 'In order to extirpate the Slave Trade by commercial settlements you must begin with them the whole circumference of Africa.'<sup>1</sup>

The proved success of Lagos had not deflected the tendency of British opinion at this time to regard the British Empire as already quite big enough and to eschew all projects of further territorial expansion. Heath's proposal fared no better than Buxton's. He was backed, it is true, by his naval colleague. 'The death blow', said Hillyar, 'to the Slave Trade on the west coast of Africa was the capture and retention of Lagos,' and, since Zanzibar was a similar focus of the Trade, he had no doubt that its occupation or cession would 'very materially tend to suppress the Slave Trade on the east coast.'<sup>2</sup> But no other witness ventured to support the admirals. The Sultan, it was pointed out, would never dream of selling Zanzibar—'You might as well talk of purchasing Germany'<sup>3</sup>—and the notion of its seizure was vigorously repudiated by the officials most concerned. When the idea was mooted in Bombay, said Kaye, 'the India Office telegraphed that it would not be entertained for a moment.'<sup>4</sup> The cession or sale of Zanzibar, said Vivian, had not been considered. 'They have never offered to cede it, and I do not see that we should have the slightest right to take possession of it.'<sup>5</sup>

So the policy which emerged from the discussions of the Committee was the old policy of treaties and naval action, but in a new shape. They had been asked to consider whether it was possible to 'put an end entirely to the traffic in slaves by sea', and they decided that it was. The treaty, they declared, must provide for the abolition, not the restriction, of the Slave Trade, and the naval patrol must be extended and improved.

The cardinal paragraphs of their report were these:

<sup>1</sup> *East Africa and its Invaders*, 287-9.

<sup>2</sup> *1871 Committee*, Q. 1151-2.

<sup>3</sup> Q. 281, 415, 1068.

<sup>4</sup> Q. 282.

<sup>5</sup> Q. 125-7.

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'Your Committee, having heard the evidence, are strongly of opinion that all legitimate means should be used to put an end altogether to the East African slave trade.

'They believe that any attempt to supply slaves for domestic use in Zanzibar will always be a pretext and cloak for a foreign trade, while the loss of life and the injury caused to maintain even the limited supply of slaves required for this purpose must of necessity be so great as to forbid this country continuing to recognise any such traffic in slaves.'

The Committee recommended, accordingly, first, that the Sultan should be informed that, if the foreign or overseas Trade were not stopped by other means, the British Government would take the requisite measures 'to put an end to all slave trade whatever, whether foreign or coasting'; and secondly, that the Sultan should be invited to conclude a new treaty, 'having for its object the entire abolition of the Slave Trade'.<sup>1</sup>

As to the patrol, the Committee recommended an increase in the size of the squadron, the provision of steam launches, and the appointment of trustworthy interpreters.<sup>2</sup>

That their main proposal was drastic the Committee were well aware. They had been told that, if no more slaves were allowed to come to Zanzibar, the economic welfare of the island would rapidly decline and the Arabs would revolt. But, citing Rigby's evidence, they took the view—an over-sanguine view as will be seen—that the Arabs were beginning to understand that free labour might be more profitable than slave. Indeed, the Committee were so fully convinced that the cessation of the Trade would mean a rapid increase in the legitimate commerce of Zanzibar that they set aside the proposal to compensate the Sultan for loss of the duties on the slaves legally imported into the island under the existing treaty. 'Your Committee do not believe that the Sultan of Zanzibar would be ultimately a loser by the abolition of the Trade.'<sup>3</sup>

Finally, the Committee took the unusual course, as observed in Chapter III, of urging that Kirk's services at Zanzibar should be retained.<sup>4</sup> Events were to prove them right. The execution of the policy they recommended was to rest in the last resort with Kirk.

<sup>1</sup> 1871 *Committee*, text of Report, viii.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, viii-ix.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, ix.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 60, above.

## IX

### THE CRUX

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#### I

It has been pointed out more than once that the chief obstacle to a policy of abolishing rather than restricting the Slave Trade at sea was that abolition implied the gradual extinction of Slavery itself. The coast-towns would still be able to obtain slaves in the interior, though for those in the north from Mombasa to Mogadishu it would mean a long march overland from the termini of the inland trade-routes at Kilwa and its neighbourhood, and that in turn would mean a greater cost, a heavier mortality, and a higher price. But Zanzibar, Pemba and Mafia, and, strictly speaking, Pate too, would be in far worse case. They would get no new slaves at all; and, on the assumption that the death-rate in the existing slave community would continue to be higher than the birth-rate, there would presently be no slaves left.

It was not only a stubborn conservatism, fortified by the sanction of their faith, that impelled the Arabs to repudiate the bare idea of Slavery coming to an end. They were convinced that without slaves they would be ruined. That they could keep up their households and cultivate their plantations as economically with free wage-paid labour seemed to them a fantastic notion. But at this very time, as it happened, the process of change-over from slave labour to free was actually in operation at three points in the East African field. In each case it was on a relatively small scale. In each case the moral to be drawn was not as clear as it might have been. In each case the employers concerned were not Arabs. But in all three cases it was evident that the results of the change-over were at any rate not ruinous.

The first case was that of the Indian community at Zanzibar. For ages past the Indians had bought and kept slaves as the Arabs had, but not in such large numbers. They were not agriculturalists. They had steadily obtained a grip on land in Zanzibar by mortgage or purchase; but they preferred for the most part to rake off a profit from Arab cultivation of the clove-plantations than to cultivate themselves. But, if they did not need many slaves for agriculture, they needed them for their households, their business offices, and their shops, and in 1859 they owned, as will appear, a substantial number of them.

If the British Government and Parliament had wished to destroy the whole slave system in East Africa, to abolish Slavery as well as the Slave Trade as they had abolished it in the British Colonies by the Act of 1833, they could not have done it. The Sultan of Zanzibar was an independent sovereign, and no Act of Parliament could operate in his dominions without his consent. As a matter of fact it was not till after 1897, when Zanzibar had become a British Protectorate, that Slavery was outlawed there.<sup>1</sup> But the great majority of the slave-owning Indians residing in East Africa were not the Sultan's subjects, they were British subjects; and while the Act of 1833 did not extend to them—it abolished Slavery only in the British Colonies—the Act of 1824, consolidating previous measures against the Slave Trade, made it illegal for any British subject anywhere, except in British 'overseas territories', to buy or sell a slave. Furthermore an Act of 1843 had annulled the legal status of Slavery in British India, and, applying and extending the Act of 1824, had prohibited slave-trading by 'British subjects in foreign countries and settlements not belonging to the British Crown'.<sup>2</sup> Thus the continued ownership of slaves, mainly obtained by purchase, by British Indians at Zanzibar was clearly an anomaly. It had been pointed out by Hamerton, but it was left to Rigby to remove it. Within a year of his arrival he set about the task on his own initiative and with characteristic zest. Early in 1859 he convicted a British subject, who was not in this first case an

<sup>1</sup> The legal status of slavery was partly abolished in 1897 and completely in 1907. It was abolished in Tanganyika Territory in 1922.

<sup>2</sup> 5 G. IV. c. 113: 6 and 7 V. c. 98. The exception in the Act of 1824 was to enable planters in the Colonies, primarily the British West Indies, to deal in slaves *within* those colonies after importation from Africa had been suppressed by the Act of 1807.

Indian but of European extraction, of buying a slave boy and had him sent to jail. A little later he imprisoned a British Indian for the purchase of a slave girl. Further proceedings were interrupted by Barghash's rebellion, but towards the end of the year Rigby resumed his attack on a more comprehensive scale. He gave notice that 'the purchase or sale of slaves by British subjects in any part of the world' had been forbidden by British law, and that all British subjects owning slaves must bring them to the consulate within one month for the purpose of emancipation on pain of being fined up to £100 for each slave not so delivered. Not unnaturally the British Indian community was in an uproar. The order meant the sudden loss of all their property in slaves; for there was no suggestion that they would be compensated as slave-owners in British Colonies had been compensated under the Act of 1833. Rigby was told he would be murdered if he tried to execute his order; and at the end of the month not a single slave had been brought in for emancipation. Thereupon Rigby summoned one of the wealthiest 'banyans' of Zanzibar to the consulate, and, on his refusing to deliver up his slaves, he clapped him in irons and had him imprisoned in the Fort. The British Indians at once declared a *hartal* or cessation of work, and informed the German and American business-firms that all foreign trade would be stopped unless the obnoxious order were rescinded. Rigby countered with another proclamation to the effect that all stocks and whipping-posts on plantations owned by British subjects would be forthwith destroyed and that any British subject found possessing or dealing in slave chains and so forth would be punished. This firmness had its effect. Before long Rigby was occupied all day in receiving slaves at the consulate, having their emancipation duly attested by the *kadi* according to Arab law, providing them with certificates and registering their names. In February 1860 the rate of emancipation was about 300 a day. In March he recorded a total of 2,700, in May a total of 3,562. Later in the year he extended the process of liberation to Pemba. When he left the consulate in 1861, no British Indian within his knowledge possessed a slave. Altogether about 6,000 had been freed.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rigby to F.O., 1. v. 60; F.O. 54. 17. The account in Russell, 139-143, is based on Rigby's journal and letters and on his evidence before the 1871 Committee. For the number 6,000, see 1871 Committee, Q. 587.

Protected by their certificates of emancipation from re-enslavement, the ex-slaves seem to have had little difficulty in making a living. Those who had been engaged on plantations remained in occupation of the holdings on which they had previously 'squatted', working part of the week for their old masters. In Zanzibar, where there had always been a dearth of free labour, most of them continued as wage-earners the work they had done as slaves. In this case, therefore, the difficulty experienced elsewhere in disposing of freed slaves was negligible. 'I never had the slightest trouble', Rigby told the East African Slave Trade Committee in 1871, 'in providing for them and they never cost the Government a shilling.'<sup>1</sup>

This last boast was a little heartless. The British slave-owners in the West Indies, the Dutch in Cape Colony, the French in Mauritius had all been compensated for the loss of property involved in the emancipation of their slaves. But those British Indians in Zanzibar and Pemba had lost their slaves without a 'shilling' to make up for it. It would be possible, however, to pity them too much. Some of them, indeed, took advantage of the Naturalization Act of 1847 to drop their British allegiance and assume the status of Majid's subjects simply in order to keep slaves again.<sup>2</sup> But those who remained British subjects do not seem to have been seriously injured by Rigby's action. There is no evidence of a 'slump' in Indian business. In 1870 the 'banyan' community seemed as prosperous to European observers as it had in 1860.

2

This example of the economic results of emancipation might have made a deeper impression on Arab opinion if the slaves in question had been mostly employed in agriculture. In the other two cases of change-over the slaves were agricultural slaves, but their masters again were not Arabs. They were British—one an official, the other a man of business.

The official was William Sunley who had settled in Johanna,

<sup>1</sup> Russell, 143. *1871 Committee*, Q. 587.

<sup>2</sup> Evidence of Rigby and Churchill before the Committee of 1871: Q. 408–11, 636–40. The Government of India acquiesced in Indians from Kathiawar and Cutch owning slaves if they did not register themselves as being under British protection.

the chief island of the Comoro group, about 1850 and, having leased 6,000 acres of uncultivated land from the ruling Sultan for some £45 a year, had started growing sugar. In 1850, as it happened, a British consulate had been established at Johanna, and, when its first occupant died in 1852, Sunley was the natural choice for his successor.<sup>1</sup> For several years he discharged his official duties—the chief of which was to watch the operations of slave smugglers in the islands—to the satisfaction of the Foreign Office; but in 1861 it was reported at Capetown that he was employing on his estate 300 men and 200 of their wives, of whom all but about 30 were slaves, hired from the islanders who owned them. This information was passed on to Whitehall, and in due course Sunley was asked by the Foreign Office for an explanation. He submitted in reply that in their relations with him the slaves were wholly free. They could come and go as they liked: many of them worked for a few months, broke off for a time, and returned to him: he made no distinction between the thirty free men and the rest. In the island at large, indeed, there was little difference between the slaves, who were treated ‘with much gentleness’, and the villagers or country people. His method of employing slaves, he argued finally, prepared the way for their emancipation. ‘They work for wages, are treated as free men, and think it a great shame that they do not get all the wages they earn as their comrades do who have no master.’<sup>2</sup>

It was clearly one of those awkward cases in which good principles and good practice are not strictly in accord. Many British naval officers had seen Sunley’s estate—for Johanna was a station on the East Coast patrol—and none had found fault with it.<sup>3</sup> Colonel Pelly thought that the islanders greatly profited from the example of Sunley’s enterprise. ‘I believe you to be an instance’, he wrote, ‘of the wonderful benefit derivable by a semi-barbarous society from the presence of the untiring industry, energy and intelligence of an English gentleman.’ More striking still was Livingstone’s testimonial. He stayed twice at Johanna in the course of the Zambesi Expedition; and in his description of it he spoke warmly of Sunley’s work. He regretted

<sup>1</sup> *East Africa and its Invaders*, 448–9.

<sup>2</sup> Sunley to Russell, 11. i. 62: *S.P.* liii (1862–3), 1323–5.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 1324–5. For the old naval connexion with Johanna, see *East Africa and its Invaders*, 163.

the necessity of slave labour, and wished Sunley could have operated on the mainland. 'On a small island where the slave-owners have complete power over the slaves, and where there is no free soil such as is everywhere met with in Africa, the experiment ought not to be repeated.' Nevertheless Sunley had 'done all that under the circumstances could be done to infuse a desire for freedom by paying regular wages'; and 'we trust he will realise the fortune which he so well deserves to earn'.<sup>1</sup>

'Hard cases make bad law', and it was impossible for British ministers to permit the employment of slave labour by a British consul, especially when they were attacking the French 'free emigration' system in Bourbon and in Johanna's neighbour, Mayotta. So Russell drafted a stiff dispatch. He admitted that Sunley might have 'done much good by the employment of slave labour on his estates', but the British Government could not acquiesce in one such case and refuse to acquiesce in others. They would be accused, moreover, of 'tolerating the employment of slave labour by a British officer while they at the same time denounce the employment of slaves by the planters of other countries'. Russell pointed out, lastly, that Sunley's conduct was contrary to the regulations laid down for consular officers, so that the Government's decision would not take him by surprise. 'You must give up the employment of slaves in your service or be prepared to resign your commission.'<sup>2</sup>

Sunley pleaded ignorance of the regulations and protested that in the circumstances 'slave labour' was a misnomer. 'I am practically working against Slavery. The Arab element in the population of the island is fast disappearing and it is the slaves and their progeny that will people the island. These people I am civilising.' But he did not contest Russell's decision; and, since the dismissal of the slaves would 'put a ruinous termination to my undertakings here just as they are becoming remunerative', he reluctantly resigned his commission. This correspondence took time, for dispatches spent five or six months on the way between London and Johanna; but eventually, on October 1, 1865, Sunley's name was deleted from the consular list.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Zambesi Expedition*, 427-8.      <sup>2</sup> R. to S., 14. vi. 62: *S.P.* liii (1862-3), 1330.

<sup>3</sup> S. to R., 22. ii. 63; F.O. to S., 5. v. 63; R. to S., 31. vii. 63: *S.P.* liv (1863-4), 420-2. S. to R., 7. xi. 63 and 30. i. 64: *S.P.* lv (1864-5), 1130-1. R. to S., 23. vi. 65: *S.P.* lvi (1865-6), 1260.



The loss of his official status and salary did not prevent Sunley from continuing his business. In 1873 Mr. C. H. Hill, a member of Sir Bartle Frere's mission to Zanzibar, visited Johanna and gave a most favourable account of Sunley's estate. Sugar cane was being grown on 700 acres and sugar produced as good as Mauritius sugar. The estate was efficiently managed by Sunley himself and four European assistants; the 800 labourers he now employed were well looked after; all the work was paid at the same rate, but three-fifths of the slaves' wages were handed over to their masters. The financial success of the enterprise was now assured, and its example had made sugar-growing 'quite the rage among the fashionables of Johanna'. The Sultan and his brothers were now all planters, and the former had produced nearly 200 tons of sugar in 1872. 'In short,' concluded Hill's report, 'an impetus has been given to the natural love of gain which is so marked in the natives of Johanna'—more natural and more marked than in Sunley?—'and it promises to carry them on to a state of agricultural development such as does not at present exist between Aden and Mauritius.'<sup>1</sup>

This case was more impressive than that of the Indian slave-owners. In the first place the slaves who worked for Sunley were as much agricultural slaves as those of the Arabs in Zanzibar. Secondly, though not free men, their relations with Sunley were free. Their masters did not force them to accept his offers of employment, and, when employed, they were treated like free wage-earners. That Sunley had made a success of his plantations in these circumstances was, therefore, a strong point in favour of the argument that the Arabs would not be 'ruined' by slave emancipation in Zanzibar. They could only reply—and it was true enough—that they were not such good business men as Sunley.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hill's Memorandum, 10. iii. 73: *Correspondence on Sir Bartle Frere's Mission* (P.P. 1873. lxi), 44-6, 82-3.

<sup>2</sup> W. H. Wylde, of the Slave Trade Department at the Foreign Office, wrote as follows on Sunley's case: 'I very much regretted at the time that we were compelled to adopt the course we did towards Mr. Sunley, as he had set a good example of what might be done by Europeans and Natives in the successful cultivation of sugar, and the slaves he employed were really only slaves in name and were most carefully looked after and kindly treated by Mr. Sunley. We lost also at the same time the services of a most active agent for the suppression of the S.T., who kept a check on the proceedings of the

The third case was the most remarkable of them all. Captain H. A. Fraser was an enterprising Scotsman who on retiring from the Indian Navy came to live at Zanzibar where for several years he was the only unofficial British resident. In 1864, in association with Nicol & Co. of Bombay, and Smith, Fleming & Co. of London, he purchased about 2,400 acres of land near Mkokotoni, some 20 miles from Zanzibar. He proceeded to develop this estate, together with an oil and soap factory in the town, under the style of H. A. Fraser & Co. Like Sunley, he started to grow sugar-cane—he had 220 acres under it by 1873—and he also planted coconut palms and various fruit trees. Drains and roads had been made and a crushing plant erected when, presumably being in need of capital, he sold the estate to a British Indian from whom he thereafter leased it. Free labour was as hard to obtain in Zanzibar as in Johanna, and, like Sunley again, Fraser employed slaves. He contracted with four Arab slave-owners for the supply of 400 male and female slaves. They were to be ‘at the sole disposal’ of Fraser & Co. for five years, and at the end of that time they were to be freed. Fraser was to pay the Arabs ‘on delivery’ one year’s wages for each slave at the rate of 2 dollars a month (about £5 in all). In the subsequent years the wage would be half a dollar a month (about 25 shillings a year), and paid to the slaves, not the Arabs, who agreed not to ‘exact or receive’ any portion of it. In other words the slave-owners obtained £5 for each slave at the outset, and then virtually parted with him. This contract was made in the summer of 1864. A second one in identical terms for another 100 slaves was made a year later.<sup>1</sup>

From the business angle this was not an unreasonable arrangement, since the market price of an adult slave at Zanzibar was then about £5. But to Dr. Seward, who was acting-consul at that time, it seemed tantamount to an illegal purchase of slaves on Fraser’s part. In submitting the matter to his superiors in London and Bombay, he argued that all property in

Sultan of Johanna, the loss of which we have since had reason to regret.’ On this Granville minuted: ‘Is not Mr. Lumley [*sic*] a felon by Lord Brougham’s Act?’ W.’s memo., 7. iv. 73: F.O. 84. 1389.

<sup>1</sup> Seward to Clarendon, with copy of contract, 5. vii. 66: F.O. 84. 1261.

the slaves was virtually transferred to Fraser & Co. until they were freed, and that this fact should not be obscured by a 'veil of philanthropy', however genuine the intention of ultimate emancipation. 'The firm, if animated by ordinary mercantile instincts, seeks the culture of the sugar cane rather than of freedom.' The contract, he further explained, if allowed to stand, would increase the Slave Trade by increasing, as far as it went, the demand for slaves at Zanzibar. If a British firm were to start converting Zanzibar into a 'sugar island' with slave labour, the British naval patrol would become an anomaly. 'We employ our fleet to limit enslavement; we employ our capital to encourage it.' To the Arabs the riddle would be quite incomprehensible. 'Is this man an Englishman', they were already asking, 'that slaves are bought for him?'<sup>1</sup>

The legal question was soon decided. Stanley at the Foreign Office submitted it to the Law Officers who held that, without question, the labourers were slaves till their emancipation and that therefore the contract was a violation by Fraser & Co. of the Act of 1843 which prohibited any British subject, wherever resident, from dealing in or contracting for the transfer of 'persons intended to be dealt with as slaves'. Proceedings would doubtless have been taken in due course if Seward had not induced Seyyid Majid himself to intervene and to cut the knot by emancipating forthwith the slaves, now 711 in number, whom Fraser had obtained.<sup>2</sup> It was a happy solution. The British Government, wrote Stanley, were highly gratified by Majid's action and would take no further notice of the illegal contract. The Arab slave owners had got their money. And Fraser had got his slaves.

The upshot was all that could be wished—at any rate for several years. Fraser's experiment seemed even more satisfactory than Sunley's; for his labour was all free. Livingstone would doubtless have commended it on that score even more

<sup>1</sup> Seward to G. of B., 14. vii. 66 and 9. ix. 66; S. to Stanley, 10. ix. 66: F.O. 84. 1261.

<sup>2</sup> Seward to Stanley, undated, received March '67: F.O. 84. 1279. Stanley to Seward, 5. xi. 66: F.O. 84. 1261. It was thought that Majid's action should be recognised, and Seward wrote that he would be 'profoundly gratified' if he were given a portrait of the Queen. Stanley replied that 'H.M. will not sit for the Sultan', and Northcote (S. of S. for India) suggested a gift of arms or a diamond ring. No record of what, if anything, was presented to Majid has been traced.

warmly than he had commended Sunley's; but he paid his last visit to Zanzibar at the beginning of 1866 while the contract question was still *sub judice*, and his published journals contain no reference to it. It was from H. M. Stanley that Fraser got his testimonial five years later—'one of the sturdiest of Scotchmen, the most pleasant-mannered, unaffected, and sincere in whatever he did or said.'<sup>1</sup> More to the point, perhaps, the Mkokotoni estate, having come, like almost everything in East Africa, under the observation of the Frere Mission, earned the warm approval of Frere himself. There were some 500 ex-slaves, he reported, residing on the estate, receiving wages of from 2 to 2½ dollars a month (about 10 shillings), and well looked after. What especially interested Frere was the improvement in health, morale, and natural fertility among these free labourers compared with slaves. 'Captain Fraser seems to me', he wrote, 'practically and very completely and the more effectually because in some respects almost unconsciously to have solved some of the most difficult problems connected with the questions before us.' For his example had greatly weakened, not indeed the validity, but the practical importance of the strongest Arab argument against the total prohibition of the Slave Trade, namely, that it would mean the end of Slavery itself. Manifestly the agricultural development of Zanzibar could be carried on without slaves.<sup>2</sup>

Unfortunately Fraser was not as good a business man as Sunley, and the force of the Mkokotoni example was soon weakened by its author's financial collapse. Towards the end of 1874 Captain W. F. Prideaux, acting consul-general at Zanzibar, reported to the Foreign Office that Fraser had been declared bankrupt. He had been in difficulties for some time past and had undertaken various engagements towards his creditors, almost all of which he had fraudulently broken or evaded. He had now suddenly and without warning left Zanzibar for Natal, and it had been discovered that he had taken with him, and had also shipped on the previous mailboat, large quantities of sugar from his estate, although a first charge on the year's crop had been one of the securities he had given to his

<sup>1</sup> H. M. Stanley, *How I found Livingstone* (1st ed., London, 1872), 18.

<sup>2</sup> *Memorandum respecting Captain Fraser's Estate*, 10. ii. 73: *Correspondence on Sir Bartle Frere's Mission* (P.P. 1873. lxi), 32-6.

creditors. 'In fine,' wrote Prideaux, 'Captain Fraser's career at Zanzibar during the past few years has been of the most doubtful nature, and the English name has been seriously compromised in consequence.'<sup>1</sup>

Thus in none of the three cases of change-over from slave labour to free was the lesson clear and decisive. Barghash himself, it was said, was impressed by Fraser's achievement but not convinced. When, therefore, the Select Committee of 1871 recommended the entire abolition of the sea-borne Slave Trade, the Arabs were still doggedly asserting that it meant their ruin. When Sir Bartle Frere came to Zanzibar, as will be related in the next chapter, he made two answers to that complaint. The first was a denial of the assumption that the end of the Trade implied the end of Slavery. The slaves in Zanzibar, he said, once the unhealthy conditions imposed by the Trade were removed, would prove as prolific as Africans elsewhere. But, supposing the assumption were true—and this was the second and conclusive answer—'it would be no reason for permitting Arabs to murder parents on the mainland in order that children might be obtained to fill the gaps in the wasted population of these islands.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Prideaux to Derby, giving details of the frauds and enclosing a copy of the bankruptcy notice, 23. xi. 74: K.P. Va. 16-17. Cameron wrote: 'Captain Fraser has, I fancy, done a great deal to injure British prestige at Zanzibar, but the uniformly high character of the British consul there has prevented any real harm being done.' C. to Derby, 29. xi. 75: K.P. Vb. 77.

Fraser's share in the controversy over sending supplies to Livingstone will be dealt with in *Livingstone's Last Journey*. For the business-career at Zanzibar of Captain Cogan, also retired from the Indian Navy, see *East Africa and its Invaders*, 488-91.

<sup>2</sup> Frere to Granville, 13. iii. 73: K.P. IIIa. 84.

## X

### THE POLICY OF ABOLITION

#### i. *At Sea* (1873-1876)

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##### I

The case for Abolition as stated in the Select Committee's Report in 1871 was strengthened by Kirk's dispatches from Zanzibar in the early months of 1872. Reference has already been made to his masterly review of the Slave Trade.<sup>1</sup> Writing again on May 22, he reported the renewal of the 'open season' on May 1. 'Never, since coming to Zanzibar, have I seen so many large dhows come in, crowded with slaves, and seldom have the slaves imported been landed in a worse state. . . . There is every sign of the Slave Trade being on the increase . . . and to anyone on the spot the means at our disposal under the existing treaties, are obviously useless [to suppress it].'<sup>2</sup>

It was now equally obvious in London, and the Gladstone Government decided, accordingly, to implement the main recommendations of the Select Committee without further delay. A draft treaty was prepared under which the Queen and the Sultan would jointly declare that 'the export of slaves from the coast of the mainland of Africa, whether destined for transport from one part of the Sultan's dominions to another or for conveyance to foreign parts, shall entirely cease.'<sup>3</sup> The Treaty would also require the closing by the Sultan of all markets for imported slaves, and the prohibition by the British Government of 'protected' Indians possessing or acquiring slaves.<sup>4</sup> For the

<sup>1</sup> K. to Granville, 25. i. 72: F.O. 84. 1357.

<sup>2</sup> K. to G., 22. v. 72: *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Article I. Text of draft treaty, *Correspondence on Frere Mission* (P.P. 1873. lxi), 4-5.

<sup>4</sup> Articles II and IV.

execution of the treaty, if concluded, the naval squadron would be enlarged and its efficiency increased. At the same time the treaty system for stopping the Trade at its import end was to be stiffened up. The Sultan of Muscat and the chiefs on the Arabian coast were to be reminded of their existing undertakings to prevent the importation of slaves, and, if necessary, new treaties were to be made. As an inducement to the Sultans of Zanzibar and Muscat to concur in these proposals, the former was to be relieved of the obligation to pay the subsidy to the latter required by the Canning Award of 1861, while the latter was to be assured of the regular payment of the subsidy by the Government of Bombay.<sup>1</sup>

To carry out these decisions and in particular to negotiate the treaties a 'Special Mission' was appointed. This alone differentiated the new attack on the Arab Slave Trade from its predecessors. The Treaty of 1822 with Seyyid Said had been negotiated by a British naval officer on service in East African waters, the Treaty of 1845 by an ex-officer of the Indian Navy. Still more eloquent of the Government's determination was their choice of an 'envoy'. Few of the great company of 'pro-consuls' who have served the British Empire have acquired so high a reputation as that enjoyed at this time by Sir Bartle Frere.<sup>2</sup> Nor was it only his standing, his proved ability, his attractive personality, that made him the ideal negotiator. He was an old observer and an old hater of the Arab Slave Trade. At Bombay he had learned at least as much about it as anyone in England, and there, too, as it happened, he had met Livingstone on the eve of his last journey and had been deeply impressed by him. 'Knowing the great interest you take in the suppression of the East African Slave Trade,' wrote Granville, 'Her Majesty's Government have entire confidence that you will carry out your present mission with the same zeal and ability which have so eminently characterised your long and distinguished services in India.'<sup>3</sup>

Frere left England on November 21 by the overland route to

<sup>1</sup> Granville to Frere, 9. xi. 72: *ibid.*, 2-3. Subsidy, pp. 30-1, 72-4, above.

<sup>2</sup> For his career, see J. Martineau, *Life of Sir Bartle Frere* (London, 1895), and W. B. Worsfold, *Sir Bartle Frere* (London, 1923).

<sup>3</sup> G. to F., 9. xi. 72. *Correspondence on Frere Mission*, 4. For Frere's opinion of Livingstone, see Blaikie, 384-5. 'A perfect Christian gentleman.' 'Every year will show how vast have been the results of the movements he set in motion.'

Brindisi whence H.M.S. *Enchantress* would convey him to Zanzibar; and he took advantage of his stop at Paris to explain the objects of his Mission personally to the French Foreign Minister, Comte de Rémusat, and to solicit his aid. It appeared that M. de Vienne, the consul at Zanzibar, was then on leave in France, and de Rémusat assured Frere, who also had an interview with M. Thiers, that de Vienne would be instructed 'to give every support to the objects of the Mission' on his return to Zanzibar. Frere, however, got the impression 'that no very active co-operation was to be expected from the French Government'.<sup>1</sup>

At Rome Frere's reception was more encouraging. The French Roman Catholic missions at Zanzibar and Bagamoyo were directly confronted with the Slave Trade, while those at Bombay and the Seychelles were concerned with the care of rescued slave-children. The Pope, accordingly, received Frere 'with much cordiality' and expressed his 'full sympathy' with his mission, and its objects were duly commended to the heads of all the missions concerned in a circular letter from the Secretary of the Propaganda. Frere also did his best to awaken laymen at Rome to the commercial opportunities awaiting them in East Africa once the Slave Trade had been destroyed. It was 'a new idea for Italy', said Visconti Venosta, the Italian Foreign Minister, but he welcomed Frere's offer to supply Signor Sella, the Commerce and Finance Minister, with a memorandum on 'the probable growth of Italian trade with East Africa'. There is a steady demand, it pointed out, for European manufactures all down the coast and for tropical raw materials in Europe; the ubiquitous 'banyan' would make expensive Italian establishments unnecessary; and transport was now provided by the monthly mail-steamers from Aden to Zanzibar. If a commission visited East Africa 'on behalf of Italian merchants', there was little doubt that its report would lead to the development of 'a direct commerce, useful alike to Italy and Africa, and capable of very essentially aiding our efforts to prevent a revival of the Slave Trade'.<sup>2</sup> A similar desire, it may be mentioned here, for the expansion of American business in East Africa was expressed by the British ambassador at Washington when he explained the object of Frere's Mission to the Secretary of

<sup>1</sup> F. to G., 24. xi. 72: K.P. IIIa. 9.

<sup>2</sup> F. to G., enclosing memo., 4. xii. 72: K.P. IIIa. 11.



State.<sup>1</sup> Clearly, then, the British Government were not contemplating any exclusive economic advantage in East Africa to reward them for their humanitarian crusade.

On December 9 Frere boarded the *Enchantress* at Brindisi, and on the 14th he landed at Alexandria. During the six days he spent at Cairo he had four talks about the Slave Trade with the Khedive, which were a significant prelude to the coming negotiations at Zanzibar. Ismail declared that, as a Moslem prince, he could not put an end to slavery in Egypt by a *coup de sabre*; but he was anxious to stop the Slave Trade in the Sudan. Sir Samuel Baker's expedition, financed by the Egyptian Government, had checked it on the White Nile. If he had the moral support of Great Britain to justify him in the eyes of his subjects, he would promise to abolish the Trade from the south altogether, and then Slavery would 'soon wear itself out'.<sup>2</sup>

On Christmas Eve Frere rejoined the *Enchantress* at Suez; on December 31 he was at Aden; and at dusk on January 12, 1873, he arrived at Zanzibar. 'The anchor was hardly let go in front of the British consulate when Dr. Kirk came on board.' He was soon followed by the Sultan's *wazir*, Nasir-bin-Said, with whom it was arranged that Frere should have his first formal meeting with Barghash next afternoon.<sup>3</sup>

The Mission was well staffed for the task before it. Frere's secretary and confidential adviser was the Rev. G. P. Badger who had served, it will be remembered, with Coghlan on the Arbitration Commission in 1861. Major C. B. Euan Smith was military attaché and private secretary, and Captain Fairfax naval attaché. The other three members of the staff were Colonel Pelly, now British Resident at Bushire, and Mr. C. H. Hill and Mr. C. Grey, both of the Foreign Office. And behind these instruments of British policy were the instruments of British power. Backing H.M.S. *Enchantress* in the harbour lay H.M.S. *Briton*, *Daphne* and *Glasgow*, the ~~last~~ the flagship of the patrolling squadron, with Rear-Admiral Cumming, the C.-in-C., on board.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Thornton to Fish, 8. iv. 73; K.P. IIIb, U.S.A., 7.

<sup>2</sup> F. to G., with Memo. of conversation, 24. xii. 72, 1. i. 73; *Correspondence on Frere Mission*, 7-8.

<sup>3</sup> F. to G., 24. xii. 72, 4. i. 73, 14. i. 73; *ibid.*, 7, 18, 24-5.

<sup>4</sup> G. to F., 20. xi. 72; F. to G., 14. i. 73; *ibid.*, 6, 24.

## 3

On the afternoon of January 13, as arranged, Frere and the members of the Mission went ashore to the British consulate and proceeded thence through the narrow streets, 'thronged with a crowd of Arabs and Negroes such as I am told has never before been collected at Zanzibar' to the Sultan's palace. Barghash received them with marked courtesy, and, when Frere presented the Queen's letter, he 'rose, all present following his example, and according to eastern custom raised it to his head as a mark of veneration'. Introductions and a little formal conversation followed, and then the Mission withdrew. On the following afternoon Barghash returned the visit. On its way to the *Enchantress* his barge was flanked by double lines of the British ships' boats. All the yards of the squadron were manned, and a royal salute of twenty-one guns was fired. There was a little more talk on board—about the rumour that an Egyptian force was coming to relieve Livingstone, about the new steamship service from Aden to the Cape *via* Zanzibar. No inferences could be drawn from this ceremonial prelude to the Mission's work, but the Sultan, it was observed, had 'shown great good humour'.<sup>1</sup>

It had been decided to prepare the ground for negotiation by a series of informal interviews between Dr. Badger and Barghash with whom the learned Arabist had been on friendly terms for the last ten years or so. At the first of these, which was held a few hours before the latter's visit to the *Enchantress* on the 14th, Badger briefly explained the British Government's wishes and produced an Arabic copy of the draft treaty. Barghash's comments were confined to the financial issue. Coming on the heels of the hurricane from which Zanzibar would take years to recover, the cutting-off of the supply of labour from the mainland would mean absolute ruin.<sup>2</sup>

On January 15 Barghash consulted his family and his advisers, and on the 16th he held a council of the Arab sheikhs. About fifty attended, including the leading el-Harthi. The meeting was held in secret, but Kirk's agents informed him that

<sup>1</sup> F. to G., 14. i. 73: *ibid.*, 24-5.

<sup>2</sup> Badger's report, 14. i. 73, enclosed in F. to G., 26. iii. 73: *ibid.*, 49. Hurricane, see p. 56-7, above.



THE FRERE MISSION  
Cairo, December 22, 1873

*Sir Bartle Frere, Rev. G. P. Badger,  
Mr. Clement Hill, Capt. Fairfax, Major Euan Smith, Mr. C. Grey,  
Mr. B. C. A. Frere*



the draft treaty had been submitted to the council and peremptorily rejected.<sup>1</sup> On the same day Badger had a second interview with Barghash at which his two *wazirs*, Nasir-bin-Said and Mohammed Bakashmir, were present. They pleaded for delay, for a gradual abolition of the Trade, for 'small doses of poison' rather than one fatal overdose. 'You import coolies from India', said Barghash, 'into the Seychelles and Mauritius. What would be the consequence to those islands if such supplies were stopped at once?' 'The coolies', Badger replied, 'left India of their own free will: they were not kidnapped from their homes and forced into slavery.' He admitted that the Treaty would inflict some hardship on Zanzibar, but 'by what right', he asked, 'do you impose tenfold greater hardships on the wretched slaves who are torn from their homes, wives from husbands and children from parents, to alleviate your distress?'

'The Sultan was moved almost to tears when he spoke of the consequences which he felt sure would result from the proposed treaty. He expressed over and over again his most anxious wish to concede what Her Majesty's Government demanded, and asked me to relieve him from the dilemma of either sealing the doom of his country or incurring the displeasure of the English.'<sup>2</sup>

Between January 16 and 26 Badger had two more interviews with Barghash at which, on Frere's instructions, he emphasised three special points: (1) that the British Government would ensure the Sultan's protection against any antagonism his compliance with their wishes might provoke; (2) that the French, German, American and Portuguese Governments had expressed their sympathy with the object of the Mission; (3) that, if the Treaty were not concluded, only such slaves would be permitted by the naval patrol to land at Zanzibar as were 'adult working slaves, the lawful property of His Highness or his subjects other than notorious slave dealers', so that in any event the supply of fresh slaves by the slave dealers would be stopped. On January 19 Barghash held another council of sheikhs. It was unanimous, he told Badger, in refusing to 'commit suicide'. 'We respect the British Government too much', they had said, 'to believe that they would resort to force. We hold by God and the old Treaty.'

<sup>1</sup> Kirk's memorandum, 16. i. 73: K.P. IIIa. 101-2.

<sup>2</sup> Badger's report, 16. i. 73: *ibid.*, 103-4.

Nevertheless the impression Badger formed at this stage was that Barghash and his advisers were fighting for some amelioration of the terms but would surrender in the end. Kirk, after seeing Nasir-bin-Said, thought the same. 'Unless some bad advice gains influence,' he wrote on January 24, 'the Treaty will be signed the moment they give up the last hope of reprieve. I think that, were Sir Bartle Frere to get up steam and move off with the whole fleet to-morrow, he would have the Treaty with him.'<sup>1</sup>

Frere was anxious that Barghash should not feel that he was being pressed to make an unreasonably quick decision. It was not till January 27 that the principals again came face to face, and it was then at Barghash's request, not Frere's, that they met. The *venue* was the British consulate; and, while Kirk, Badger and some other members of the Mission supported Frere, Barghash was alone. Early in the discussion, which lasted for two hours, it was clear that Barghash had not believed Badger's repeated warnings that the terms would not be modified nor their execution postponed: for he frankly admitted that he had asked for the meeting with Frere to make sure, as he said, that there was 'no middle course open to me which you might have kept back'. Informed that his only choice lay between acceptance or refusal of the terms as they stood, he insisted, as he had from the outset of the negotiations, that either choice meant ruin. 'A spear is held at each of my eyes. With which shall I choose to be pierced?' No new arguments were raised. At the end Barghash reiterated his desire for British friendship and pleaded for a little more delay. 'We are a poor and narrow-minded people, and require time to see our way.'<sup>2</sup>

On January 29 Badger again interviewed Barghash and asked for a decision in writing. A letter was duly dispatched to Frere on the 31st, but it was not a decision. It recapitulated all the arguments against the Treaty—there would be a rebellion in Zanzibar; the agriculture of the island would be ruined for lack of labour; slavery was endorsed by Moslem law. The general tenour of the letter was summed up in its closing paragraph: 'If your Excellency can ask of us something lighter than these de-

<sup>1</sup> Badger's reports, 17, 19, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26. i. 73: Frere's notes, 16, 17, 18, 21. i. 73: K. to Euan Smith, 24. i. 73: *ibid.*, 104-14.

<sup>2</sup> Frere's note, 27. i. 73: *Correspondence on Frere Mission*, 60-2.

mands such as we could bear and such as would involve less loss to us, we would bring ourselves to grant them out of respect for the British Government and in consideration of your having come to us. On the other hand, if this matter is forced upon us, we have no power to resist, and we commit our cause to Almighty God.<sup>1</sup>

On February 1 Frere saw Barghash again. This time the meeting took place at the palace, and it was attended by fourteen or fifteen of the Sultan's relations and advisers. Frere's reception was markedly less courteous than on his previous visit to the palace. There was no escort nor guards along the way. So far from coming out to meet Frere, the Sultan kept him waiting.<sup>2</sup> Owing to the presence of other Arabs than Barghash, the proceedings were more formal than at the meeting at the consulate, and most of the time was occupied by Frere's restatement of the British Government's wishes. In the course of it he gave the first hint of financial pressure. Among other matters, he said, which would have to be settled were the Muscat subsidy and the duties on gum-copal and ivory from the mainland coast.<sup>3</sup> He asked, finally, for a clear decision, adding that he was shortly leaving Zanzibar for a few days' cruise. To all this, translated sentence by sentence into Arabic by Badger, Barghash listened with close attention. Now and again he expressed his disagreement, sometimes in vehement tones. At the mention of the subsidy, for instance, he 'interposed with much warmth', 'We will not pay Muscat a cent.' When Frere had finished, he repeated yet again his old complaint: 'We have considered what has been said, and we are convinced it involves destruction to us. It is quite in your power to destroy us, but you ask us to destroy ourselves, and that we cannot do.' Once more the simple, final 'No' had not been said.<sup>4</sup>

On February 3, having received no further communication from Barghash, Frere departed on his cruise. He visited Pemba and Dar-es-Salaam and returned to Zanzibar on the 8th. He found encouraging news awaiting him. Kirk, whom he had de-

<sup>1</sup> Badger's report, 29.; i. 73 Barghash to Frere, 31. i. 73: *ibid.*, 62-4.

<sup>2</sup> It was subsequently stated that this lack of attention was due to the difference between Arab and English time, but no apology was offered.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 96, above.

<sup>4</sup> Note of interview, 1. ii. 73: K.P. IIIa. 118-20. Frere communicated the gist of his speech to Barghash in a letter, 1. ii. 73: *ibid.*, 120-1.

puted to communicate with Barghash in his absence, reported that he had been invited to an interview at the palace on February 4. Barghash had received him 'with the usual courtesy', and had taken him to 'a private chamber', accompanied only by his interpreter. Early in the conversation Barghash had come to the point, the same point he had clung to from the outset: 'When you find you have heaped a load upon your camel that it cannot pass the city gate, do you not lessen the burden and gain your object? Now lessen this heavy burden, be it ever so little, and we are your servants, and you will gain all you desire. Give us some respite, and we will accept the Treaty.' A respite, Kirk replied, had already been offered. In the hope of the Sultan's 'cordial compliance' in the wishes of the British Government, the Envoy had assented to a year's grace before the Treaty should come into force; but in view of the Sultan's attitude this concession had been withdrawn and the Treaty must be taken or left as it stood. The rest of the conversation covered familiar ground. Kirk stressed his Government's desire to help the Sultan financially or otherwise, once he had signed the Treaty; and he re-affirmed the concurrence of foreign Governments in the Mission's object, with special emphasis, in view of what was being 'said in town', on the goodwill of the French Government. Then Barghash asked that his Council might hear what Kirk had said, and seven councillors, including Suliman-bin-Hamed, Hamed-bin-Suliman, Nasir-bin-Said, and Mohammed Bakashmir, were brought in. Barghash repeated to them the gist of what Kirk had said. Their response was to renew Barghash's plea for a respite. 'Grant us a time', said Hamed, 'before bringing the introduction of slaves entirely to a close.' How many new slaves, Kirk was asked, did he think that Zanzibar had normally imported for its own use in a year? Not more, said Kirk, than two or three thousand. 'Give us that', exclaimed Hamed, 'even for a few years, and the matter is ended.' Little more was said, but, when the meeting broke up, Kirk was convinced that the Council had been seriously impressed by what had passed and had definitely abandoned their previous attitude of open and indiscriminate opposition: 'Throughout the whole discussion nothing could have been more deferential or courteous than the conduct of every Arab present. There was not one angry or strong expression let fall, although conversation passed most



freely, unrestrained by the presence either of the Sultan or of the British agent.<sup>1</sup>

Frere promptly decided to take advantage of this new mood, and he told Kirk to let the Sultan know that, if he would undertake in writing to accept the Treaty on the understanding that its operation would be delayed, negotiations would be continued on that basis. Three days passed, and no answer came. Then, on February 11, Frere received at last the straight decision he had asked for. 'We cannot sign the new Treaty [Barghash wrote] on account of the hardship it involves to us, on account of dread of insurrection, and on account of the ruin which it would cause to the plantations of our subjects. . . . You request that we signify to you either our acceptance or our refusal. In one word, No.'<sup>2</sup>

That, clearly, was the end of it. There was nothing more that Frere could do. On February 13 he drafted a dispatch describing the breakdown of the negotiations which he had summarily reported by telegraph. 'The wishes of England and of a large majority of the civilised nations of the world, expressed in a manner calculated to give them the utmost weight, have been thwarted and treated with marked disrespect by a sovereign who claims the right to dispose for his own benefit of the liberty and happiness of races over whom he has no right either of conquest or succession and whose persons he can only acquire through theft and murder committed by his subjects.'

Frere's personal disappointment is evident enough, but he held out hopes that, as he had warned Barghash at his last meeting with him, the old Treaty could be so strictly operated with the aid of an enlarged naval patrol as practically to prevent the further transport of slaves by sea.<sup>3</sup>

4

What had happened to bring about this sudden and decisive change of front? The answer to that question recalls the international aspect of East African affairs which had faded into the background since the Anglo-French Declaration of 1862.

<sup>1</sup> K. to Euan Smith, 8. ii. 73; and K.'s memorandum: *Correspondence on Frere Mission*, 67-9.

<sup>2</sup> B. to F., 11. ii. 73: *ibid.*, 70.

<sup>3</sup> F. to G., 13. ii. 73: *ibid.*, 36-7.

Before Frere left England the French, German, and American Governments had been asked by the British Government to support the Mission and instruct their agents at Zanzibar to do what they could to assist it.<sup>1</sup> All the replies were favourable. Herr Delbrück, the German Foreign Minister, referred the question to the Hamburg merchants engaged in East African commerce. They disapproved—so Lord Odo Russell, the British ambassador at Berlin, learned—of German participation in the British move against the Slave Trade, but nevertheless, after some delay, Delbrück informed Russell that his Government sympathised with the British desire 'to put an end to the horrors and loss of human life' caused by the Trade, that they gave 'with pleasure their moral support to the Mission', and that the German consul at Zanzibar had been ordered to help in the negotiations.<sup>2</sup> The Mission arrived at Zanzibar before Herr Schultz received these orders, and his attitude at first was cold. When Mr. C. H. Hill called on him to acquaint him with the Mission's business and solicit his assistance, he repeatedly declared his conviction 'that the primary object of Her Majesty's cruisers in these seas was not and had not been the repression of the Slave Trade'. But, when his orders came, he loyally obeyed them. He asked Colonel Pelly to go with him to the palace and joined with him in urging Barghash 'both officially and personally' to consent to 'what all civilised Europe required of him'. 'I have every reason', Frere told Granville, 'to be satisfied with Mr. Schultz' conduct.' His initial coldness had been due in Frere's opinion to his dislike of British investigation of the area in which Hamburg trade had been so widely and so quietly extended. 'It was a sort of secret mine of wealth; and O'Swald

<sup>1</sup> Granville to Lyons, 16. ii. 72; G. to West, 21. x. 72; Sir E. Thornton to G., 28. x. 72; Odo Russell to G., 4. v. 72; G. to Plunkett, 13. viii. 72: K.P. IIIb, *France*, 1-2; *U.S.A.*, 1; *Germany*, 1-4. Similar approaches were made to the Portuguese Government (K.P. IIIb, *Portugal*, 1-9), mainly because of their position at Mozambique and their previous connexion with Slave Trade questions: there was no Portuguese trade north of Cape Delgado and no Portuguese consul at Zanzibar.

<sup>2</sup> Odo Russell to Delbrück, 16. ii. 72; R. to Granville, 4. v. and 23. x. 72; R. to D., 26 and 28. x. 72; R. to G., 17 and 20. xi. 72; D. to R., 19. xi. 72: K.P. IIIb, *Germany*, 1-6. In his letter of November 17 to Granville, Russell says: 'I may here mention a curious fact, communicated to me by M. Delbrück, which is that a sister of the Sultan of Zanzibar is married to a German gentleman and resides at Hamburg.' See pp. 46-8, above.

& Co. were by no means anxious to have Zanzibar opened to all the world. But, like sensible men, when they found you were determined to let more light into these dark corners, they saw that their monopoly was gone, and they determined to make the best of the altered state of affairs.<sup>1</sup>

At Washington the response was prompt and cordial. When Sir Edward Thornton, the British ambassador at Washington, informed Mr. Fish, the Secretary of State, of the nature and object of the Mission, he found him wholly sympathetic. 'The Government of the United States', said Mr. Fish, 'was always ready to do everything in its power to contribute to the abolition of Slavery.' He showed the ambassador a dispatch which had been sent some time previously to Mr. W. G. Webb, the American consul at Zanzibar, directing him to inform the Sultan that the provisions of the Treaty of 1845 permitting the transport of slaves by sea within his dominions ought to be annulled; and in Thornton's presence he ordered instructions to be sent to Webb and also to Captain Wilson, commanding the U.S.S. *Yantic* in East African waters, to co-operate with Sir Bartle Frere 'in any proper way to secure the success of his Mission'. Captain Wilson was very ready to do what he was told. Without waiting, indeed, for the arrival of the Mission, he addressed a spirited note to the Sultan, exhorting him to follow the example of 'the last among the great civilised nations to abolish Slavery as an institution in their midst' and by stopping the 'traffic in human flesh' to attain for his dominions the same unity, peace and prosperity which the United States had attained since the Civil War. Wilson further suggested that the Sultan should conclude a similar Abolition Treaty with his Government to that which the British Envoy was coming out to negotiate. 'I am told', wrote Frere later on, 'that the captain hoped to have greeted us with the news that he had already accomplished the objects of our Mission, and thus, as his secretary explained it, have "acted Stanley and Livingstone over again".' Such rivalry, however, was of the friendliest kind. Wilson was on the best of terms with the Mission when it arrived, and Frere warmly acknowledged in his dispatches to the Foreign Office the 'most willing co-operation' he received

<sup>1</sup> F. to G., 14. i. 73; F. private letter, 1. ii. 73; F. to G., 25. iii. 73; K.P. IIIa, 44, 46, 51, 150.

from him. Very different, however, was the attitude of the American consul,<sup>1</sup> whom Barghash, no doubt, regarded as a more authoritative representative of his Government than Wilson. To begin with, the Arabic version of Wilson's letter to the Sultan which was produced by Webb's interpreter was a travesty rather than a translation. It merely assured the Sultan of American good-will and asked him to confine the Slave Trade to his African dominions—to do, that is, what Said had done in 1845. Incredible as it may seem, it was thus also that Webb interpreted his instructions from Washington. When Kirk and Pelly called on him at Frere's desire, showed him a copy of Frere's instructions, and asked if he had been directed to assist the Mission, Webb replied that his instructions did not authorise him to do so, since they were 'limited to intimating to the Sultan of Zanzibar the wish of the Government of the United States that the exportation of domestic slaves from the Zanzibar dominions to Muscat should cease'. He was not prepared, he said, to do more than that, and he did not. He even neglected to return the official call of Frere's representative or in any way to recognise the existence of the Mission. It is difficult to understand Webb's conduct. Can it have been due to nothing more than jealousy of Kirk's predominant influence at Zanzibar? But, whatever its cause, it was not allowed to disturb the harmony of Anglo-American relations. When the contrast between Wilson's and Webb's interpretation of their identical instructions was pointed out at Washington, it was only to be expected, as the Foreign Office admitted, that Mr. Fish should defend his distant consul pending further inquiry: and the American ambassador in London, General Schenck, hastened to assure Granville personally of his Government's genuine desire to co-operate in suppressing the Slave Trade. 'America had achieved a great work at home,' he said, 'and was encouraged thereby to pursue the same course abroad.' Mr. Fish, he shrewdly added, 'had some doubts of our [British] success in persuading the Sultan to go against his own self-interest by moral suasion.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> He was actually vice-consul and acting consul.

<sup>2</sup> Thornton to Granville, 28. x. 72, 3. iii., 15 and 29. iv., and 3. v. 73; Fish to T. and replies at various dates from 30. x. 72 to 14. iv. 73; K.P. IIIb, U.S.A., 1-9. Frere to G., 10. ii. 73, enclosing Wilson's letter to Sultan, 11. xii. 72, and account of interview with Webb: F.O. 84. 1389. Webb's instructions supported the abrogation of the right of transporting slaves by

The American consul's studied coldness, countered though it was to some extent by Captain Wilson's ardour, may have helped to stiffen Arab resistance to British pressure, but it was not a major, still less a decisive, factor, if only because the United States were so far away. The honour of thwarting Frere's diplomacy was a Frenchman's. France, it has been observed, was the only Power with a political interest in East Africa, and it was only fourteen years since French policy at Zanzibar had come into sharp conflict with British policy. That quarrel had been resolved, it is true, by a mutual 'self-denying ordinance', the Declaration of 1862, under which both France and Britain undertook to respect the independence of the Sultan's dominions; but it was natural, no doubt, that the French Government should have quicker and sharper misgivings than any other as to the real purpose of Frere's elaborate Mission. Frere himself, as has been seen, felt that the promise of co-operation given him by de Rémusat in Paris was not quite wholehearted; and he was not surprised to find that M. Bertrand, the French vice-consul at Zanzibar, held aloof, like Consul Webb, from the Mission and refused to back its representations on the ground that he had received no instructions to that effect. It was rumoured in Zanzibar during the next few weeks that France was opposed to the new Treaty, and it was noticed that those Arabs who still maintained a so-called 'French party' were 'loudest in declaiming against the selfish policy of England and urging the Sultan to "no surrender"'. It seemed, moreover, that Barghash himself did not believe Frere's assertions that the British and French Governments were in agreement. It was hoped, however, that all such doubts would soon be dissipated. The consul, de Vienne, was expected to be back at Zanzibar within the next few weeks, with orders, it was to be supposed, to put de Rémusat's assurances into execution. He arrived by the mail-boat on February 9, the day after Kirk had reported to Frere his conviction that

sea within certain limits of the Sultan's dominions (see Fish to Thornton, 8. iv. 73). This was correctly based on the British definition of Frere's objective. Muscat, of course, was part of Said's dominions and the main purpose of the Treaty of 1845 was to suppress the Slave Trade between his African ports and Muscat and his other Arabian ports. But Muscat (as has been seen in Chapter II) had been separated from Zanzibar in 1856, and is it conceivable that Webb honestly supposed that it was his duty to press Barghash merely to re-affirm the Treaty of 1845?

Barghash was on the point of yielding. Next morning he had an audience with the Sultan and later in the day was visited by Mr. Hill on Frere's behalf. He was shown a copy of Frere's instructions, but declined to let Frere see his. He professed not to have had time to acquaint himself with their contents and on that ground refused to support Frere's appeals to Barghash.<sup>1</sup> For the moment Frere could do nothing. He could only report to Granville his conviction, fully shared by Kirk, that de Vienne was directly encouraging Barghash's resistance. Granville for his part promptly raised the question in Paris. From the beginning of March to the beginning of May de Rémusat was pressed by Lord Lyons and his colleague at the Embassy, Lord Lytton, to explain de Vienne's conduct and to bring it into line with his own repeated promises of co-operation. Under this pressure de Rémusat wavered. De Vienne, he admitted, had been at Zanzibar some years and might have 'got entangled in the cause of interests hostile to the policy he is now instructed to obey'. If this proved to be the case, he should be recalled. Finally, when de Vienne's own report was in his hands, de Rémusat sought to throw the blame on Barghash. The Sultan, he declared, with 'oriental cunning' had tried 'to bring about a misunderstanding between France and England', and with that purpose had proposed that their joint guarantee of his independence should be superseded by a single guarantee. He had actually 'informed the French Government that he believes his independence to be menaced by Great Britain and desires to place himself under the exclusive protection of France'. 'That is a protectorate', de Rémusat promptly assured Lytton, 'which we should certainly refuse.' At the same time he expressed the hope that the Sultan's independence would be respected. Could not his plea for restriction rather than total abolition be accepted? Could not he be allowed to import 10,000 slaves a year? The same good reasons against such a compromise were given to de Rémusat by Granville as had been given to Barghash by Frere, and the proposal was not pressed. The French, in fact, were no more willing to quarrel seriously with Britain about Zanzibar in 1873 than in 1861. So Granville was finally assured that, though there might be disagreement as to the best method of attaining the object

<sup>1</sup> F. to G., 14. i. and 10. ii. 73; F.'s private letter, 1. ii. 73; Hill's memorandum, 10. ii. 73; K.P. IIIa, 52-6.

desired by both Governments, 'the Sultan would find no *point d'appui* in the French against the British Government.' But that was late in May, and the harm had been done, the *point d'appui* had been afforded early in February, when de Vienne did not reject, if he did not himself suggest, the idea that Barghash could depend on French assistance if he refused to yield to British wishes.<sup>1</sup>

On February 15 Frere left Zanzibar in the *Enchantress*, escorted by H.M.S. *Briton*, to inspect the slave-ports along the southward coast. He put in at Dar-es-Salaam, Mafia Island, Kilwa, Kiswere, and Lindi. The Arabs, it appeared, had everywhere been warned by 'a banyan emissary' to 'send their slaves inland and tell us nothing'. At Kiswere and Lindi both Arabs and Indians did their best to hinder and divert Frere's inquiries; and at Kilwa, which Frere described as 'the real hotbed of the Slave Trade on this coast', and 'a very large town even more thriving than Zanzibar', their antagonism was almost dangerous. 'I never saw anything so insolent as the soldiers of the Arab Governor or so obstructive as the usually mild and obsequious Indians. I was really thankful when we got the whole of our party embarked without a collision. But I am certain these people would never have behaved so without distinct orders, and equally certain that, unless both Sultan and "banyans" are brought to their senses, we shall somewhere have a very unpleasant manifestation of slave-traders' anger at our interference with their proceedings.'<sup>2</sup>

British prestige, in fact, had suddenly and sharply declined all down the coast, and the reason is clear enough. Reports of what had happened at Zanzibar had quickly spread. When Frere continued his voyage to the Comoro Isles, Nossi-bé and Majunga, he found that the news of the rejection of the Treaty had got there before him 'with the addition that the result was due to the efforts of French diplomacy'.<sup>3</sup> If Frere had been impatient and overbearing, if he had backed his proposals with an ultimatum, the Treaty would have been signed long ago. As it was,

<sup>1</sup> Correspondence between Granville and Lyons, later Lytton, at various dates from March 18 to June 14, 1873; Lytton to Rémusat, 22. iv. and 17. v. 73: K.P. IIIb, *France*, 20, 23. The proposal of a protectorate is in Lytton to G., 6. v. 73: *ibid.*, 21.

<sup>2</sup> F. to G., 27. ii. 73: K.P. IIIa, 77.

<sup>3</sup> F. to G., 26. iii. 73: *ibid.*, 99.

his self-restraint had inevitably been misinterpreted. The British—so the Arabs and Indians reasoned—had acquiesced in Barghash's brusque rejection of their demands because they could not enforce them against the will of France.

On March 12 Frere returned to Zanzibar. The situation, Kirk reported, was unchanged. The Sultan's attitude, once so anxious and subdued, was now 'bold and defiant'. On Frere's instructions Kirk had brought pressure to bear on the two financial points—the exaction of special duties on ivory and gum-copal from the coast in violation of the restrictions laid down in the Treaty of 1845 and the payment of the subsidy to Muscat. Barghash met the first point by following the example set by Majid in a similar matter in 1870, and reducing the duties in question to the normal five per cent. On the second point Kirk could get no answer. As to the Slave Trade, 'His Highness and all about him seemed to regard the whole thing as a grave farce.'<sup>1</sup> There was virtually no hope, then, in continuing the negotiations, but Frere decided to give Barghash a last chance of unsaying that 'No'. He instructed Kirk to inform the Sultan that the Mission was shortly leaving Zanzibar for good and to request answers to the personal letters he had presented to him from the Queen, the Viceroy of India, the Secretaries of State for Foreign Affairs and for India, and the Governor of Bombay. Kirk was also to intimate that, if the Sultan had any counter-proposals of his own to make with regard to the Slave Trade, this was the last opportunity of making them. Barghash's response was even frostier than might have been expected. He declined to discuss the Slave Trade. He affected to take no interest in Frere's departure. 'Very much with the air of a man who is reminded that it is mail day or near post time', he remarked that 'he had been so busy that he had not had time to look over some letters he wished to ask me to take'. It was more remarkable, especially in view of the usual Arab punctiliousness in such matters, that the replies which Barghash wrote to those five personal letters were not only quite perfunctory but all in practically the same terms. Queen Victoria was to receive, it seems, a 'circular dispatch'.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> K. to K., 17 and 21. ii. 73; F. to G., 13. iii. 73; *ibid.*, 66, 69, 84.

<sup>2</sup> F. to G., private letter, 25. iii. 73; F.O. 84. 1389.



Frere had failed to secure the Treaty, but he refused to admit that this implied the failure of his Mission. At an early stage of the negotiations he had begun to consider how, if the Sultan should prove obdurate, the sea-borne Slave Trade might be stopped without the explicit sanction of a treaty. And during the first few days of his voyage north from Zanzibar he drafted a series of dispatches explaining the measures he had taken on his own authority and the further measures he recommended the British Government to take.

His main programme of action was as follows. First, the shipment of slaves brought from the interior of Africa should be regarded and treated as piracy. Secondly, the right conceded to Zanzibar subjects by implication in the Treaty of 1845 to continue the shipping of slaves from port to port within the Zanzibar dominions should be withdrawn. Thirdly, all slave-markets should be closed. Fourthly, an embargo should be placed on all Zanzibar customs houses to prevent the passage of slaves. Fifthly, the naval squadron should be increased to fourteen ships, ten for the African coast and four for those of Arabia and the Red Sea.<sup>1</sup> On his way north, Frere sent back instructions to Captain Malcolm and Kirk for the execution of part of this programme. The coast south of Zanzibar was to be closely watched and all slave ships seized; and all slaves entering or leaving Zanzibar were to be examined by the British consul and to be freed unless it were proved that they were *bona fide* domestic or other slaves accompanying their owner, who must be a subject of the Sultan permanently resident in his dominions, or required by their owner for work in some other part of those dominions and not intended for re-sale or exportation.<sup>2</sup>

There were weak points in this programme. Frere recognised that the first two proposals would have to be submitted to legal opinion; but on the question of piracy he argued that the Arabs had no manner of right to abduct Africans from their homes, that the slaves were 'stolen goods', and that no naval officer

<sup>1</sup> F. to G., 29. v. 73: *Correspondence on Frere Mission*, 141 ff. This is a long and masterly dispatch, surveying the whole problem of the Arab Slave Trade. The measures recommended are summarised at its close.

<sup>2</sup> F. to Malcolm, 28. iii. 73; F. to K., 28. iii. 73: K.P. IIIa, 138, 153.

would hesitate to board a ship and release persons confined in it if they were Europeans instead of Africans; and on the question of the Treaty he held that its unilateral amendment, accompanied by coercion, was justified by the Arabs' flagrant violation of its main intent. It was only the second point that was, in the event, referred to the Law Officers of the Crown. They advised that Frere's instructions 'imposed terms upon the Sultan not imposed by the Treaty of 1845', and that in carrying them out British naval officers would not be covered by the Act of Parliament enabling them to give effect to the aforesaid Treaty. Further, their execution would infringe the Sultan's independence, which Britain and France had promised to respect in 1862, and would therefore 'amount to an act of war'.<sup>1</sup> These rulings revealed the fundamental weakness of Frere's plan for achieving the object of his Mission by other means than a new treaty. It was not only a complicated plan, raising hard points of law and risking, as the Law Officers pointed out, the disturbance of legitimate trade conducted by the subjects of European Governments; but it involved the use of force, and, if force was to be used at all, why not use it to obtain the Treaty which would remove all difficulties by giving the decision to suppress the Trade by sea the validity of international law?

Frere had quickly realised that the action required to suppress the Trade, whether under treaty or otherwise, would demand a substantial strengthening of the British agency at Zanzibar. He had found Kirk the one and only British official in the place, shouldering a crushing burden of work, consular, judicial and diplomatic, and still awaiting the definite confirmation of his appointment. Soon after his arrival, therefore, Frere had written to the Governor of Bombay urging him to put Kirk's post as acting political agent and consul on a permanent footing without further delay and also to appoint a medical officer as surgeon to the agency and assistant to Kirk in his political and consular duties. 'The mass of work which Dr. Kirk has at present to get through renders the above measure more than ever necessary.'<sup>2</sup> The first half of Frere's request had been

<sup>1</sup> J. D. Coleridge and G. Jessel with J. P. Deane to G., 24 and 25. iv. and 3. v. 73: K.P. IIb, *Law Officers*, 1-3. G. to K., 9. v. 73: K.P. IIIa, 156.

<sup>2</sup> F. to Sir P. Wodehouse, 30. i. 73: F.O. 84. 1389.

## THE POLICY OF ABOLITION: AT SEA

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promptly granted. On March 18 Kirk's appointment as political agent was gazetted in India: his appointment as consul by the Foreign Office would follow from that as a matter of course.<sup>1</sup> The question of an agency surgeon was postponed 'pending the result of Sir Bartle Frere's Mission'; and before leaving Zanzibar Frere drew up a report for the Viceroy on the establishment which the new attack on the Slave Trade would necessitate. Kirk's duties, he pointed out, would now be so much more important and responsible than those of the normal consul that the office should be raised to that of a consul-general, and equipped with a larger staff. To meet the immediate need, he had himself authorised the appointment of Captain F. Elton, who, after military service in India, had been employed by the Natal Government as a 'frontier agent' to deal with the native tribes, as assistant political agent and vice-consul, and Mr. Frederic Holmwood, 'a young English gentleman of apparently good education who has been travelling for his amusement' to assist in the office and court work.<sup>2</sup>

Of the many other questions on which Frere reported—his long, detailed and admirably written dispatches and memoranda provide indeed an exhaustive and invaluable account of East Africa and all its major problems at that time—the most important was the question of the complicity of the local Indians in the Slave Trade. After full inquiry he came to the conclusion that while direct Indian participation in the Trade was relatively rare, the Indian business community was necessarily cognisant of it and indirectly involved in it owing to the fact that practically all trading and finance in East Africa were in its hands.

'Everywhere, wherever there is any foreign trade, it passes through the hands of some Indian trader; no produce can be collected for the European, American or Indian market but through him; no imports can be distributed to the natives of the country but through his agency. At every port the shops which collect or distribute articles of commerce are kept almost exclusively by Indians. Throughout our whole circuit from Zanzibar round by Mozambique and Madagascar and up to Cape

<sup>1</sup> *Gazette of India*, 18. iii. 73: G. of I. to G. of B., 27. iii. 73: K.P. II. 33.

<sup>2</sup> F. to Viceroy, 20. iii. 73: F.O. 84. 1389.

Guardafui we did not, except at Johanna, meet half a dozen exceptions to the rule that every shopkeeper was an Indian.<sup>1</sup>

This Indian monopoly of trade was naturally linked with an Indian monopoly of finance. Kirk estimated the amount of British Indian capital invested in Zanzibar at not less than £1,600,000; and the books of one firm, which happened to have been submitted to judicial investigation, revealed a capital of about £430,000 invested in loans and mortgages in East Africa. About £200,000 of this had been advanced to Arabs residing in Zanzibar, on the coast, and in the interior. The Arabs of Tabora had borrowed £57,000. Since much of this money must have been used for equipping slave-hunts or purchasing the victims of them, the Indian business men were clearly guilty of an indirect association with the Trade. The customs, moreover, were farmed by Indian firms and collected by Indian agents. 'It is their business to know of every slave landed or shipped and thus to become accomplices in evading the exertions of British officials and the British Government to stop the Trade.' At the same time Frere admitted that the 'more respectable Indian houses' were as anxious as anyone that the Trade should be quickly and finally abolished. 'They see clearly that, while it is an open question, all other trade must suffer and the full development of the unrivalled commercial capabilities of the coast be indefinitely postponed.' But, until the Trade was abolished, the Indian connexion with it would continue in varying degrees and ways. All that could be done in the meantime was to deal strictly with cases of direct participation and to confirm and extend to the mainland the measures taken by Rigby to prevent British Indians owning slaves. British protection should, of course, be withdrawn from British Indians convicted of slave trading; but such negative action would not absolve the British Government from its liabilities. Without the safeguard of the British flag, Frere argued, British Indians would not have ventured in such numbers to the coast and thus become implicated in the Trade.<sup>2</sup>

The treatment of this Indian question would have been more complicated if it had been necessary to deal with the Indians

<sup>1</sup> F.'s Memorandum on 'banyans' in East Africa, 31. iii. 73: *Correspondence on Frere Mission*, 98 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

who came not from British India but from protected Indian States, principally Cutch, separately and differently from British Indians. The Rao of Cutch, however, had brushed this difficulty aside. At the end of 1872 he had issued a spirited proclamation in which he recalled the measures taken by his father to suppress the Slave Trade and informed his subjects in East Africa that they were not to engage in that 'inhuman traffic'. 'If you continue to carry it on or be in any way concerned in it, the British Government will deal with you as with its own subjects and punish you severely; and furthermore your property in Cutch will be confiscated by my Government. Know this to be certain.'<sup>1</sup> Buying and selling men and women, said the Rao, is 'a horrible thing'. It would have been easier to stop it if his fellow ruler at Zanzibar, also an Asiatic, had felt the same.

Frere left Zanzibar on March 17 on H.M.S. *Daphne* for Bagamoyo where he met Cameron and Dillon on the eve of their march to Tabora and spent the night at the French Mission.<sup>2</sup> On the 19th he rejoined the *Enchantress* off Pangani and proceeded to Mombasa where he stayed a week, visiting the mission-stations at Ribe and Rabai and working on his dispatches. On the 28th he continued his voyage north along the coast, landing only at Lamu, and reached Makalla on April 6. The Nukeeb had signed an undertaking in 1863 to 'prohibit the export or import of slaves from or to any part of my territory',<sup>3</sup> but, as this was only binding on himself, Frere now asked him, and he readily consented, to renew it on his heirs' and successors' behalf as well as his own. At Shabab Frere did not see the Nukeeb who lived some twelve days' journey from the coast, but he was told by his minister that the old undertaking, which the Nukeeb had signed in the same terms and at the same time as his colleague at Makalla, had already been renewed and the text dispatched to

<sup>1</sup> Translation of Notification issued in Gujarati, 15. xii. 72: *ibid.*, 18-19. The Rao's *diwan* accompanied Frere to Zanzibar to assist in his inquiries, and, while he took a more lenient view than Frere of Indian complicity in the Trade, he recommended the same kind of stringent action to stop what there was of it. Memorandum of Kazi Shahabudin, 9. ii. 73: K.P. IIIa, 184. For the preceding Rao's action in 1836, see *East Africa and its Invaders*, 501.

<sup>2</sup> This was the Black Fathers' Mission which had moved to Bagamoyo from the 'barrack' they had occupied in Zanzibar in 1860: see pp. 33-4, above.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 152, above.

Aden.<sup>1</sup> On April 12 Frere arrived at Muscat, and it was at once made very clear that Seyyid Turki's attitude to the Mission was quite different from his brother's at Zanzibar. When Colonel Pelly went ashore and explained to the Sultan the wishes of the British Government, he immediately acquiesced in them and signed a note to that effect; and the very next morning, with due ceremonial, the Treaty was signed by him and Frere. *Mutatis mutandis* its text was identical with that of the draft Treaty which Frere had brought away unsigned from Zanzibar. It was, of course, of much less practical importance; the Trade could be checked on the Arabian coast but it could be killed only on the African; but the Muscat Treaty together with a highly respectful letter from the Sultan to the Queen was something at least for Frere to take home. 'Seyyid Turki', wrote Frere in better spirits, 'did not conceal either from himself or from me the difficulty which he would meet with in enforcing the faithful observance of this Treaty on all his subjects, but with the support and goodwill of Her Majesty's Government this courageous prince will, I doubt not, compel its practical fulfillment.' That 'support and goodwill', it may be noted in passing, implied, no doubt, in Turki's mind the payment of the Canning subsidy, now two years in arrear—a question which he did not fail to raise with Frere.<sup>2</sup>

Colonel Pelly had already in the previous autumn persuaded the 'Trucial Chiefs' of the Persian Gulf to renew the pledges to suppress the Trade given in 1847. Thus Frere left Muscat for Bombay and England with the chain of new engagements for the destruction of the Trade complete except for its most vital link. The work of the Mission, wrote Frere in his last dispatch from the western Indian Ocean, 'leaves the Sultan of Zanzibar alone in his determination to resist the wishes of the civilised world and to maintain the horrors of the Slave Trade.'<sup>3</sup>

Frere reached London on June 12. Two days later the Foreign

<sup>1</sup> F. to G., 15. iv. 73: *Correspondence on Frere Mission*, 89–90. The Nukeeb of Shabah had been in the service of the Nizam of Hyderabad and it was on the advice of the Nizam's *diwan*, Sir Salar Jung, that he had renewed the undertaking.

<sup>2</sup> F. to G., 16. iv. 73, enclosing text of Treaty: *ibid.*, 90–1. Sultan to Queen, 15. iv. 73: *ibid.*, 92.

<sup>3</sup> F. to G., 16. iv. 73, enclosing Pelly's dispatches and letters from the 'Trucial Chiefs': *ibid.*, 93–7.

Office received a telegram from Kirk stating that Barghash had signed the Treaty.

## 6

On or about May 1 1873, the man who had done most to inspire the new attack on the Arab Slave Trade was found, a little before dawn, kneeling beside his camp bed, in the very heart of Africa, dead.

On May 1 also, as it happened, the last short round of the fight with the sea-borne Trade began; for it was on that day that the 'season' for shipping slaves from the coast opened,<sup>1</sup> and it was on that day, therefore, that Frere's scheme for stopping shipment without a treaty came into force. Kirk had at once communicated to the Sultan the gist of the instructions which Frere had sent back to him from Mombasa; but any faint hopes that Barghash, seeing the British meant what they had said, would after all surrender were quickly dispelled. He paid no attention to Kirk's communication. He wrote to Kilwa, the chief port of shipment, authorising the continuance of the Trade on its old footing from May 1 onwards; and he had the usual notice posted up at the custom house at Zanzibar announcing the re-opening of the Trade.<sup>2</sup> It was the same with regard to the slave-market. Frere had suggested to Barghash that, if he refused the British Government's main request, he might at least consent to close the market. In the previous August, as it happened, the site of the old market had been sold by the Mwenyi Mkuu, the chief of the original native community in Zanzibar,<sup>3</sup> to a British-protected Indian from Cutch. Kirk had promptly reported this to the Foreign Office and had been instructed to declare that agents 'who engaged directly or indirectly in such transactions . . . must expect no favour, countenance, or protection whatsoever from the British Government'. Kirk firmly applied this screw. The site, it was understood, would not be used again for its old purpose.<sup>4</sup> But Barghash was not minded to take this opportunity of stopping the public traffic in slaves. 'On the contrary, the space to which the regular auctioneers betook themselves on being driven from their

<sup>1</sup> See p. 158, above.

<sup>2</sup> K. to G., I. v. 73: K.P. II. 256.

<sup>3</sup> See *East Africa and its Invaders*, 321. <sup>4</sup> For its present use, see p. 362 below.

former position has been cleaned and improved with covered roofs to accommodate the dealers.<sup>1</sup>

Captain Malcolm had also received instructions from Frere, and the cruisers *Briton* and *Daphne* kept a close watch on the coast, especially near Kilwa. The result was a complete stoppage of open shipment of slaves. The traders at Kilwa, it seemed, were less ready to defy the British Government than their Sultan. On May 8 Malcolm reported that not one slave dhow to his knowledge had left Kilwa. Nor had a single slave been landed at the custom house at Zanzibar. By May 16 upwards of 3,000 slaves were cooped up at Kilwa awaiting shipment. On May 31 Kirk summed up the results of the first month's action as follows: 'Whereas in former years over 4,000 slaves have usually been imported here by the end of May, this season only two small cargoes have been entered at the customs house—one with nineteen, the other with two slaves on board, both from Bagamoyo, a coast village almost within sight of the harbour. From Kilwa not a single slave has yet escaped, and the Arab owners, driven to desperation, are selling off the strongest at very reduced prices to speculators who propose attempting their transport by land. Again, during the past thirty-one days, instead of the wholesale exportation of past years [from Zanzibar], I have only one cargo of thirty-seven slaves to report as escaped from the island, and that only destined for Pangani, a neighbouring town on the mainland. The Sultan's customs house has, in fact, only realised in slave duties during the month 116 dollars against a sum of 8,290 dollars as duties for 4,145 slaves imported during the same month of 1872.'<sup>2</sup>

Thus the open shipment of slaves, authorised by the Sultan under the old Treaty, had practically ceased. From points on the coast, however, less carefully watched than Kilwa, a number of slaves were still being smuggled into Zanzibar. The new market, indeed, reported Kirk, seemed even better attended than the old.<sup>3</sup>

Meantime the Foreign Office had decided to intervene. Frere's dispatch reporting the Sultan's 'No' and asserting his

<sup>1</sup> K. to G., 6. viii. 72; F.O. to K., 30. xii. 72; F.O. 84. 1357. K. to G., 8. v. 73; F.O. 84. 1374.

<sup>2</sup> K. to G., 31. v. 73; F.O. 84. 1374.

<sup>3</sup> K. to G., 8. v. 73; F.O. 84. 1357.



belief that it had been mainly due to the influence of the French consul arrived on April 20. A week later came Frere's account of Kirk's last interview with Barghash and of the measures Frere proposed to put into force on his own authority. In view of the Law Officers' opinion on the latter,<sup>1</sup> Granville wrote to Kirk by the usual Aden mail on May 9, bidding him, if he had already begun to carry out Frere's instructions, to 'withhold further measures in that direction with as little ostensible retraction as possible'.<sup>2</sup> A few days' further reflection, and Granville and his advisers had adopted the logical alternative to Frere's illegal plan. The contrast between what de Rémusat had said and what apparently de Vienne had done may well have been the dominant factor in their decision. France, it seemed virtually certain, was trying to revive the policy of 1859; and the mention of a French protectorate, however blandly it were disavowed in Paris, showed to what lengths that policy might, if the opportunity arose, be pressed. But in any case it was now obvious that the sea-borne Trade could only be stopped by force. Let it be used, then, openly and directly to obtain the Treaty. On May 15, accordingly, a telegram was sent to Colonel Stanton at Cairo to be deciphered and sent on by mail to Kirk at Zanzibar.

'Inform the Sultan that Her Majesty's Government require him to conclude the Treaty as presented to him by Sir Bartle Frere, inserting in the first Article between the words "entirely cease" and the words "and any vessel" the following words: "And the Sultan engages to take effectual measures within all parts of his dominions to prevent and suppress the same." You will state to the Sultan that, if the Treaty with this insertion is not accepted and signed by him before the arrival of Admiral Cumming, who is ordered to proceed at once to Zanzibar, the British naval forces will proceed to blockade the island of Zanzibar. . . . The naval officers will receive from the Admiralty orders to establish the blockade and enforce it according to the law of nations on being informed by you that the Sultan refuses to sign the Treaty.'<sup>3</sup>

This telegram, together with the dispatch of May 9 which it had overtaken, reached Zanzibar by the mailboat on June 2. To Kirk it was unquestionably welcome. He had always be-

<sup>1</sup> See p. 200, above.

<sup>2</sup> G. to K., 9. v. 73: K.P. IIIa, 156.

<sup>3</sup> G. to Col. Stanton, 15. v. 73: *ibid.*, 157.

lieved that without some such action Barghash and still more his Arab advisers would never be convinced that the British Government meant to have their way and would not permit any other Government to thwart them. He had little doubt that Barghash would bow to the ultimatum. Since Frere's departure, it is true, he seemed to have thrown in his lot again with his old hot-headed Mlawa advisers. But against that and overweighing it was the fact that he would not obtain this time the external encouragement which had stiffened his opposition to Frere. On the one hand Kirk had now received a copy of M. de Rémusat's explicit declaration that the French Government desired the Sultan's compliance with British wishes. On the other hand, Consul W. G. Webb had left Zanzibar in bad health in April, and his place both as consul and as manager of the Boston firm of Bertram & Company had been filled by the return of his predecessor, Mr. F. R. Webb. Now F. R. Webb was not only a better business-man than W. G. Webb, and more influential with the Sultan, but he disagreed, as Kirk discovered directly he arrived, with W. G.'s attitude to the British Mission. He was inclined at first to think that a compromise was desirable, that something less than the full requirements of the Treaty might suffice for the time being; but, when he found Barghash obdurately determined, despite his frank and firm advice, not to yield an inch, he came round to Kirk's opinion that half-measures were no use. Indeed, on the day before he received the telegram, Kirk wrote to inform the Foreign Office that Webb favoured even more forcible action than had been taken since May 1.<sup>1</sup>

On receipt of the telegram Kirk, having privately informed Schultz and Webb of its purport and requested their support, asked the Sultan for an interview, 'at which I desired his Council might be present'. It was arranged for next morning (June 3), and when Kirk arrived alone at the palace, he found Barghash attended by four councillors, three of whom had been present at the interview of February 4.<sup>2</sup> He proceeded at once to read the first paragraph of the telegram. A blockade, he explained, meant that no ships whatever, Arab or European, would be

<sup>1</sup> K. to G., 27. v. and 1. vi. 73: F.O. 84. 1374.

<sup>2</sup> Suliman-bin-Hamed, Hamed-bin-Suliman, and Mohammed Bakashmir.

allowed to approach the island. When Barghash tried to argue that treaties had never been concluded in this way, Kirk cited the recent siege of Paris. 'But I have not come', he went on, 'to discuss, but to dictate.' His next words were aimed at the councillors. This time, he said, he hoped they would not misdirect the Sultan. He had asked for their presence in order to put the responsibility on their shoulders. If the Treaty were not signed, they must not be allowed to disown the disastrous consequences and 'shift all blame upon the Sultan'. It now appeared that before Kirk's arrival the Council, anticipating that he would present some new demand, had decided on 'a refusal, and probably a defiant refusal'; for, when Kirk finished speaking, Barghash turned to the councillors and asked, 'Shall I give him the word we agreed upon this morning?' 'No, no!' was the whispered answer of them all. Kirk then observed that it was futile to hope for French protection. He had delivered, he said, an ultimatum. Its rejection meant war—war of the only kind England could wage against a defenceless state. With that he withdrew.<sup>1</sup>

On the same evening Kirk went again to the palace at Barghash's request. On this occasion the three Arabs in attendance were not members of the Sultan's Council. They were Mlawas, the men who now, as in the first few months of Barghash's reign, had more weight with him than his official advisers. It was clear to Kirk at once that the old policy of defiance had been abandoned. There were no protests now, nor stubborn silence. As if accepting the responsibility of which Kirk had spoken that morning, the Mlawas carried on a keen discussion for an hour and a half. First they tried to find a flaw in Kirk's authority. Then they wanted to discover if, like Frere, he had power to modify the terms of the Treaty. Some explanation of the additional clause followed. Finally, seeing Kirk would not make concessions, Barghash declared that he would go forthwith to London and asked Kirk, to whose hands he said he would commit the regency, to postpone the blockade till he could telegraph the result of his intercession with the Foreign Office. Kirk answered that to postpone the blockade was beyond his powers and that, having heard a rumour that the Sultan might contemplate abandoning his throne and his subjects at this critical

<sup>1</sup> This and the succeeding interviews are fully described in K. to G., 5. vi. 73: F.O. 84. 1374.

time, he had ordered Captain Malcolm to prevent it. In any case, he went on, there was no prospect of the Sultan obtaining concessions in London. As it was, the Trade had been practically shut down. Was it likely that the Government would allow it to re-open for a single day? . . . That closed the interview. Throughout it, Kirk reported, 'the greatest courtesy and deference were shown to me, and conversation was open and unrestrained on both sides. I left thoroughly convinced that, but for some unforeseen incident, my object was gained, and the more so that I had placed the position clearly before His Highness' secret and powerful advisers.'<sup>1</sup>

Against one such incident, remembering what had happened in 1859, Kirk took precautions. It was rumoured in the town that a French warship was coming and that the Sultan would board it and ask to be taken to France. Kirk discussed this possibility with Malcolm, and they agreed that, if a French vessel were signalled, a blockade of Zanzibar town should be at once proclaimed.<sup>2</sup>

Later the same night Barghash sent for Webb and Schultz. Both fully supported Kirk. In particular Webb agreed that the Sultan could not possibly be allowed to desert his post at such a time. He was able, also, to explain that the blockade of the Southern States, in which he had himself participated, had been the chief factor in securing the abolition of American slavery. Schultz for his part pointed out that he had strongly recommended the Sultan to acquiesce in the British demands at the very outset of the negotiations.<sup>3</sup>

Next morning (June 4) it was de Vienne's turn. Kirk suspected, but he could not be certain, that the advice he now gave Barghash was to seek to delay a settlement in the hope that it might be referred to Paris for arbitration. It was said afterwards that Barghash angrily upbraided him for misleading him as to his Government's willingness to challenge British policy.<sup>4</sup>

That night Kirk was again invited to the palace where he found Barghash attended by both the official councillors and the Mlawas and a few other Arabs who had taken no previous part in the business. Promising at once to give his final answer before Kirk left, Barghash asked for an explanation on one or two

<sup>1</sup> K. to G., 5. vi. 73: F.O. 84. 1374.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> K. to G., 5. vi. and 2. vii. 73: F.O. 84. 1374, 1375.

points. Why was the new sentence to be inserted? To prevent the Sultan, said Kirk, from disowning all responsibility for the execution of the Treaty; but, when Barghash pleaded that all his efforts might not prove 'effectual', Kirk agreed to the addition of the words, 'to the utmost of his powers'. What about existing domestic slaves? Would they be free to travel by sea with their masters? Yes, replied Kirk: there would be no change in that respect. Runaway slaves? Could they be recovered from the mainland? Not unless they had committed a crime. That was all. 'Now I understand,' said Barghash. 'You may consider the Treaty signed. To-morrow I will ratify the deed with my own hand.' That being settled, he went on, was there any chance that, as an act of grace and in view of the sad financial state of Zanzibar, he might obtain the benefits which Frere had almost promised him if he would sign the Treaty? Would the Indian farmers of his customs, the firm of Jairam Sewji, be allowed to break their five-year contract on the ground that the expected dues on slaves would not now be forthcoming? To that Kirk answered 'No'. By concealing the fact that dues on slaves were included in their contract, the customs farmers had in his opinion forfeited any claim for its revision. And what about the Muscat subsidy? As to that Kirk would only say that Barghash had unfortunately refused to discuss it with Frere and that he could not now 'expect much consideration' from the British Government in the matter. Lastly, Barghash expressed the wish to go to England at once, accompanied by Kirk, to beg assistance for his impoverished country. Kirk urged him to postpone the voyage. It was clearly unwise, he said, to leave Zanzibar until the situation resulting from the signing of the Treaty had been cleared up. He certainly could not go himself.<sup>1</sup>

Next day (June 5) the Sultan signed, sealed, and ratified the Treaty. Kirk signed it on the British Government's behalf. The following is the English translation of its Arabic text.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> K. to G., 5. vi. 73: F.O. 84. 1374.

<sup>2</sup> Kirk was in an awkward dilemma when he received the telegram, since Frere had left no copy of the Treaty with him. He knew, of course, its tenor, but not its wording. In the course of his first interview with the Sultan, therefore, he asked if he might see his copy of the Treaty. After a long search it was discovered in a box of documents. Kirk borrowed it and copied it. As it was in Badger's handwriting he accepted it as an authoritative translation of Frere's English text, and his copy of it, with the insertion and amend-

*Treaty between Great Britain and Zanzibar for the  
Suppression of the Slave Trade*

In the name of the Most High God.

Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and His Highness the Seyyid Barghash-bin-Said, Sultan of Zanzibar, being desirous to give more complete effect to the engagements entered into by the Sultan and his predecessors for the perpetual abolition of the Slave Trade, they have appointed as their Representatives to conclude a new Treaty for this purpose, which shall be binding upon themselves, their heirs and successors, that is to say, Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland has appointed to that end John Kirk, the Agent of the English Government at Zanzibar, and His Highness the Seyyid Barghash, the Sultan of Zanzibar, has appointed to that end Nasir-bin-Said, and the two aforementioned, after having communicated to each other their respective full powers, have agreed upon and concluded the following Articles:

*Article I*

The provisions of the existing Treaties having proved ineffectual for preventing the export of slaves from the territories of the Sultan of Zanzibar in Africa, Her Majesty the Queen and His Highness the Sultan above-named agree that from this date the export of slaves from the coast to the mainland of Africa, whether destined for transport from one part of the Sultan's dominions to another or for conveyance to foreign parts, shall entirely cease. And His Highness the Sultan binds himself, to the best of his ability, to make an effectual arrangement throughout his dominions to prevent and abolish the same. And any vessel engaged in the transport or conveyance of slaves after this date shall be liable to seizure and condemnation by all such naval or other officers or agents, and such

ments, was used for the actual Treaty. That was why it was prepared and signed in an Arabic version only. As Kirk explained to Granville, he was obliged to accept the Sultan's copy as an official text unless he were to jeopardise the whole position by waiting for the English text to be sent out from home. K. to G., 5. vi. and 2. vii. 73: F.O. 84, 1374, 1375. Text of the Treaty in *S.P.*, lxi (1872-3), 173-4.

## THE POLICY OF ABOLITION: AT SEA

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Courts as may be authorised for that purpose on the part of Her Majesty.

### *Article II*

His Highness the Sultan engages that all public markets in his dominions for the buying and selling of imported slaves shall be entirely closed.

### *Article III*

His Highness the Sultan above-named engages to protect, to the utmost of his ability, all liberated slaves, and to punish severely any attempt to molest them or to reduce them again to slavery.

### *Article IV*

Her Britannic Majesty engages that natives of Indian States under British protection shall be prohibited from possessing slaves and from acquiring any fresh slaves in the meantime, from this date.

### *Article V*

The present Treaty shall be ratified and the ratifications shall be exchanged, at Zanzibar, as soon as possible, but in any case in the course of the 9th of Rabia-el-Akhir [5th of June, 1873] of the months of the date hereof.

In witness whereof the respective Plenipotentiaries have signed the same, and have affixed their seals to this Treaty, made the 5th of June, 1873, corresponding to the 9th of the month Rabia-el-Akhir, 1290.

JOHN KIRK,

Political Agent, Zanzibar.

The mean in God's sight,

NASIR-BIN-SAID-BIN-ABDALLAH,  
With his own hand.

The humble, the poor,

BARGHASH-BIN-SAID,  
With his own hand.

Apart from the insertion ordered by the Foreign Office with the words added at Barghash's request, Kirk had made two

small but important changes in the text. Frere's draft required the cessation of the Trade 'after a date to be hereafter fixed' and the closing of markets 'for imported slaves'. Kirk fixed the date as that of signature, June 5, and struck out 'imported', thus bringing to an end the public marketing of all slaves. To have left 'imported' in the text would, as he explained to the Foreign Office, provide 'a loophole for evasion of the law'.<sup>1</sup>

Having signed the Treaty, Barghash promptly acted up to it. On the same day he sent messengers to clear and close the slave market. When some Arabs collected there next morning, intending some demonstration, he sent a company of 'Baluchis' to disperse them. Finally, on June 8, he published a proclamation:

'Know that we have prohibited the transport of slaves by sea in all our harbours and have closed the markets for the sale of slaves through all our dominions. Whosoever, therefore, shall ship a slave after this date will render himself liable to punishment.'<sup>2</sup>

When the proclamation was posted, Kirk reported, 'a large crowd assembled at the customs house and read it, not without emotion'. But the Arab public, he went on, have accepted the situation, knowing that the 'final act' had not been the Sultan's only, but their sheikhs' as well.<sup>3</sup>

If the Arab extremists had persisted in their reckless defiance of the British Government and Barghash had still sided with them, the ultimate outcome would, no doubt, have been the same. The blockade would have been established. Under its pressure sooner or later the Treaty would have been signed. But there would have been or might have been other results. Certainly the blockade would have deeply embittered Arab opinion. It would probably have brought about a rebellion at Zanzibar and possibly a change of ruler, undoing all that had been done since 1859 to restore the stability, security and peace which the island had enjoyed in Seyyid Said's time. It might well have provoked also, as blockades are apt to do, some awkward international incidents. Unquestionably it was a great gain that

<sup>1</sup> K. to G., 2. vii. 73: F.O. 84. 1375.

<sup>2</sup> Copy enclosed in K. to G., 10. vi. 73: F.O. 84. 1374. The first text of the Proclamation said 'raw' slaves. Kirk at once protested to Barghash and the Proclamation was reissued with 'raw' omitted.

<sup>3</sup> K. to G., 10. vi. 73: F.O. 84. 1374.



the abolition of the sea-borne Trade, so long desired by the British people and their leaders, had been accomplished by only the threat of force and not the use of it.

The credit for that achievement must be variously apportioned. If Frere had failed at Zanzibar, he had not failed in London. His full and clear account of the negotiations and the knowledge, skill and patience he had shown had convinced the Foreign Office that he had done all that diplomacy could do. The ultimatum, as has been seen, was the logical result. The measures, again, which Frere had authorised, though some of them were of doubtful legality, had shown the Sultan in a very short time that his refusal to sign the Treaty would not save the Trade. Schultz and F. R. Webb, too, with their Governments behind them, played their part. If either or both of them had wished or been encouraged to behave as de Vienne behaved, Barghash or his advisers might conceivably have stood their ground. And, lastly, Kirk's handling of the ultimatum could not have been bettered by the most experienced diplomatist. A lesser man, saddled so suddenly with such orders, might well have faltered and made mistakes; but Kirk was as cool and sensible as if it were only another of those awkward moments on the Zambesi Expedition. Yet, even so, when it came to the pinch, he might not have been able to achieve the difficult task of bullying Barghash and his Arabs without offending them if his personal footing at the palace had not been so secure. From that early morning in 1866, when he rode out to Barghash's country-house for their first meeting, through the difficult weeks that followed his accession and through the gathering storm about the Trade, Barghash, it is clear, had acquired a steadily increasing respect for Kirk. He trusted him as he trusted no other foreigner at Zanzibar. He regarded him, so far as the circumstances permitted, as his friend. Even during the period of strain between his rejection and his signature of the Treaty, he continued to treat him with something more than courtesy. On the Queen's birthday he sent him 'a dinner of honour—a sheep roasted whole on a gigantic charger borne by slaves, pyramids of fruit and piles of confectionery'. And about the same time, seeing Kirk's eldest little daughter near the palace with her nurse, he called her in and sent her home laden with Indian toys and 'with enough sugar-candy and sweetmeats to disor-

ganise a young lady's boarding school'.<sup>1</sup> Those homely incidents are significant. It was Barghash's liking for Kirk and trust in him, more than anything else, that from first to last determined his attitude to Britain and British policy.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Elton, as cited in next note, 54-5.

<sup>2</sup> A good illustration of Kirk's relations with Barghash is afforded by an amusing incident recorded by Sir H. H. Johnston and confirmed by tradition in the Kirk family. Kirk was explaining to Barghash that a blockade would inflict great hardship on the people of Zanzibar. It would mean, for instance, a shortage of food-supplies. 'And what would you do then?' 'I would come and live with you, consul,' Barghash replied (H. H. Johnston, *The Kilimanjaro Expedition* London, 1886, 21). Elton gives another example of Barghash's sense of humour. On a visit to the consulate he noticed an Arabic copy of the Bible. 'A good book,' he observed; 'it sanctions slavery' (J. F. Elton, *Travels and Researches among the Lakes and Mountains of Eastern and Central Africa*, London, 1879, 56).

## XI

### THE POLICY OF ABOLITION

#### ii. *On Land* (1876-1884)

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##### I

The value of the Treaty was soon evident. Without it Barghash would certainly have tried to evade and obstruct all British efforts to suppress the Trade without his consent. All the Governors at the coast-towns would have followed their Sultan and done nothing or worse than nothing to assist. The suppression of the Trade would have depended entirely on the British cruisers; and, however careful their commanders might be, that would have meant, as Kirk admitted, 'serious evils'<sup>1</sup>—interference with legitimate trade, occasional cases of hasty or unjust action, unpleasant incidents arising from the misuse of foreign flags. The Treaty, on the other hand, brought Arab action at the ports into harmony with British action at sea; for Barghash, having signed it, albeit under duress, honoured his word. 'He has done all we could possibly ask,' reported Kirk at the end of the first month. He had dealt so summarily with attempts to break the new law that his people were saying he was worse than the British. He had even imprisoned a local sheikh for harbouring slaves at his house near Mkokotoni with the obvious intention of shipping them to Pemba. Nor was this a passing fit of energy. Barghash continued strictly to enforce his proclamation. More than that, he made it clear that he accepted the full consequences of the Treaty, that he for his part acquiesced in the inevitable ending of Slavery itself which he had always argued must follow from the ending of the Trade. Whatever his motives, whether to acquire the merit of a pious act or to inti-

<sup>1</sup> K. to G., 3. vii. 73: F.O. 84. 1375.

mate to his British friends that he had now committed himself to them wholeheartedly and all the way, it is significant that in 1875, before leaving for his visit to England, he executed a deed freeing all his slaves at his death except those engaged in agriculture. At Kirk's suggestion he made no secret of it, so that other Arabs might be influenced by his example.<sup>1</sup> On his return from England Barghash went further. He gave those domestic slaves their immediate freedom. 'Although I have little doubt', wrote Kirk, 'that they will continue to serve him (he has given them even as slaves regular wages), their position is totally altered.' Few of his subjects might follow his lead, but the act was bound, none the less, to help in forming a new public opinion on the issue of Slavery.<sup>2</sup>

There was another factor favouring the success of the new Treaty. The French Government might continue to take a political interest in East Africa; but there were no more attempts to promote it by showing sympathy with Arab opposition to the suppression of the Trade. The attitude of M. de Gaspary, who came to the French consulate early in 1875, was very different from that of M. de Vienne. Kirk soon reported 'a remarkable change'. Discovering that Arab dhows were systematically using the French flag to cover slave smuggling, de Gaspary determined to make an example of the first two culprits he caught. At his request they were given twenty-five lashes each in the public square before the palace and then set to labour for a year in the chain-gangs of convicts employed on public works. Thenceforward de Gaspary personally examined every dhow carrying French colours both on arrival and on departure, and, heedless of the annoyance he might cause to French planters at Mayotta or Nossi-bé, he refused papers to several dhows hailing from those islands which he suspected of intending to return with slaves. At the end of 1876, when de Gaspary was succeeded by M. Gaillard de Ferry, the British ambassador at Paris was instructed to express the British Government's appreciation of the manner in which the retiring consul had co-operated in the campaign against the Slave Trade. From the silence of Kirk's subsequent dispatches on the point it may be assumed that de Ferry did not reverse his pre-

<sup>1</sup> K. to Derby, 27. iv. 75: F.O. 84. 1416.

<sup>2</sup> K. to D., 26. iv. 76: F.O. 84. 1453.

decessor's policy. That particular episode, at any rate, in the story of Anglo-French relations in East Africa was closed.<sup>1</sup>

Meantime Kirk was making sure that Article IV of the Treaty, the article which imposed an obligation on the British only, was carried out. In the autumn of 1873 he visited all the coast-towns from Mombasa northwards while Vice-Consul Elton dealt with those in the south. All slaves held by Indians were liberated, 'irrespective of whether or not they claimed or rejected our protection.' There was no opposition. 'The Indians themselves', wrote Kirk, 'now desire so much to see the end of the question that many have come from the coast [to Zanzibar] to declare their slaves and beg that someone may be sent to give them their papers of freedom.'<sup>2</sup> A year later Holmwood sailed up the coast as far as Barawa, calling at most of the ports, and reported only two flagrant cases of newly freed slaves being forced back into slavery.<sup>3</sup> At Mombasa, which contained the largest Indian community on the mainland, slave-holding by Indians was said to have ceased by the summer of 1875. In that summer Pemba was dealt with. Indian slave-holders on that island had not been so rigorously treated since Rigby's day as those in Zanzibar; and the growth of clove plantations had led to a marked increase in the number of slaves at work. Captain Euan Smith, acting consul-general in Kirk's absence, rounded up 213 Indian-owned slaves and freed them.<sup>4</sup> Only Tanga remained, having escaped a consular visitation. Sixty-four slaves were freed there before the end of 1875.<sup>5</sup>

So far, so good; but Indian slave-holding was only a minor factor in the problem. Arabs still owned slaves and wanted new ones. Some they would obtain, no doubt, despite the Treaty, by smuggling. 'It is not to be imagined', Kirk wrote a few weeks after the signing of the Treaty, 'that contraband traffic in slaves is at an end. This will doubtless continue as long as Slavery is an institution of the coast and of the islands; and on so difficult a coast ways and means will be found to evade the

<sup>1</sup> K. to Derby, 20. iii. 75: F.O. 84. 1416; 13. xi. 76: F.O. 84. 1454; D. to Lyons, 20. xii. 76: K.P. Vb, 661.

<sup>2</sup> K. to G., 1. xii. 73: F.O. 84. 1376.

<sup>3</sup> Holmwood's report, enclosed in Prideaux to Derby, 24. xi. 74: F.O. 84. 1400.

<sup>4</sup> E. S. to D., 31. vii. 75: F.O. 84. 1417.

<sup>5</sup> K. to D., 9. xi. 75: *ibid.*

greatest vigilance on our part or that of the Sultan.<sup>1</sup> But under the new dispensation the scale of such smuggling, it was hoped, would be small. It was to Kilwa or near it that the great bulk of slaves came down from the interior, and the effectiveness of the naval patrol established before the signing of the Treaty had shown how difficult it was for slave-dhows to run the gauntlet either to Zanzibar and Pemba or to the chief Arab towns along the coast to the north.

There was another way, however, by which the purpose of the Treaty could be thwarted. The slaves collected in the neighbourhood of Kilwa could be marched overland up the coast and sold at all the towns along the way. That would be perfectly legal. There was nothing in the Treaty or in the Sultan's proclamation to forbid it. The Treaty, indeed, was not a month old before Kirk heard of slaves being moved overland from Kilwa at least as far as Dar-es-Salaam, and he dispatched a 'secret agent' to attach himself to the next caravan taking the northward road and report on its progress.<sup>2</sup> A little later Elton reported that he passed over 4,000 slaves being marched in gangs northwards between Kilwa and Dar-es-Salaam.<sup>3</sup> Clearly such caravans would have to travel a long way farther north to dispose of any large number of slaves. Pangani and Tanga might take a few, but a market for several thousands on the mainland could only be found in the northern line of towns between Mombasa and Mogadishu. It was this that made Kirk doubt the growth of a big new Trade by land. Mombasa is roughly 400 miles from Kilwa in a straight line, and Barawa another 550 miles, and the necessary deviations would make the caravan route much longer. For slaves already enfeebled by the march from the interior so long a second march was bound to mean further heavy loss of life, so heavy that Kirk did not believe the traders would attempt it. He had visited the northern coast in May 1873, and 'from my short experience', he wrote, 'of the heat, the sand, and the rocks of the country near Barawa and Kismayu and the jungles that are behind I cannot think it will be found possible to transport slaves by that route without enormous loss on the way. . . . The sea-route to Zanzibar once

<sup>1</sup> K. to G., 3. vii. 73: F.O. 84. 1375.

<sup>2</sup> K. to G., 31. v. 73: F.O. 84. 1374.

<sup>3</sup> K. to Derby, 20. iv. 76: F.O. 84. 1453.

closed, the Somali Slave Trade must die out.<sup>1</sup> He was wrong. The traders were ready to risk that enormous loss if enough slaves could be got through alive to make a profit at the journey's end.

How far and quickly the forbidden sea trade was replaced by a new land trade was revealed by a careful inquiry made all up the northward coast by Holmwood in 1874. He found that a regular system had already been organised, financed on much the same lines as the old, and marketing about as many slaves. Some of the caravans went all the way from Kilwa to the Somali towns, selling slaves as they went. Most of this traffic, as has been pointed out, was lawful, but a large part of it was not. The island of Pemba, as it happened, had escaped the full force of the hurricane which devastated Zanzibar in 1872, and the consequent rise in value of its clove production had greatly enriched the local landowners and encouraged them to extend their plantations. The demand for new slaves, therefore, which had almost ceased in Zanzibar, was greatly stimulated in Pemba; and, while smuggling slaves by sea from Kilwa had, as has been seen, been practically stopped, it was a much easier matter to run them across by night from the coast immediately opposite. Holmwood put the number smuggled over between October 1873 and October 1874 at 15,000, and Kirk, writing in the spring of 1875, at 12,000 a year.<sup>2</sup> But apart from the special case of Pemba and a little smuggling oversea from the creeks and inlets near Lamu the new Trade did not violate the Treaty. It supplied the demand of the coast towns which had previously been met by shipment from the south by way of Zanzibar. Thus Holmwood reckoned that, in those same twelve months, the Tanga district took roughly 1,000, Mombasa and its neighbourhood 1,000, Takaungu district 5,000, Malindi 1,000, Lamu and Kipini 1,200, and the Bajun country 1,000. How many were driven on further north and sold in the Somali towns could not be ascertained. But it was clear that the size of the gangs steadily diminished as they marched north not only by local 'absorption' but by death. Between Kilwa and Pangani the rate of mortality

<sup>1</sup> K.'s memorandum on the Somali Slave Trade, enclosed in K. to G., 31. v. 73: F.O. 84. 1374.

<sup>2</sup> Holmwood's Report, enclosed in Prideaux to Derby, 24. xi. 74: F.O. 84. 1400. K. to Wylde, 6. v. 76: F.O. 84. 1453.

was reckoned at between 25 per cent. and 30 per cent. The farther north the march dragged on, the higher it grew. Beyond Malindi 'the mortality begins to increase so rapidly that every hour is of importance'. Naturally, therefore, the northern prices were better than the southern. At Pangani a sound male slave cost 20 to 25 dollars, at Malindi 30 to 35, at Barawa 40 to 50. Female slaves averaged 7 dollars less, 'except young girls suitable for concubines who run from 40 to 70 dollars equally in the south and north.'

'As far as Malindi', wrote Holmwood, 'the new land-route is admitted by all to be a paying venture. He observed, indeed, that at Malindi itself and at Takaungu to the south of it new land was being cleared for cultivation. 'Next year's exports are expected to be very large.'<sup>1</sup> That was a happy prospect for the Arabs of the coastland, but less happy for the Africans of the interior who had been driven along the new route, losing at least one in four of their companions on the way, to provide the labour for that expanding cultivation. Once more the stockades at Kilwa were crowded with slaves from Nyasaland; and now a steady flow was coming down from Manyema—the new field beyond Lake Tanganyika where Livingstone saw the 'slavers' begin their bloody work in 1870-1. Cameron reported in 1874 that Tabora had become a 'great focus' of the Trade, and suggested the construction of a 3 ft. 6 in. gauge railway from Bagamoyo to Ujiji as the most effective means of stopping it.<sup>2</sup> In 1875 Euan Smith was informed that a caravan of 1,500 'raw' slaves, all one man's 'bag', had arrived at Tabora from Manyema.<sup>3</sup>

## 2

It seemed, then, in 1875 that the 'slavers' after all had won. Zanzibar, it was true, had been practically sterilised: only one or two slaves were smuggled across to the island now and then in canoes. But otherwise it was almost as if the Treaty of 1873 had never been concluded. It made little difference that, except at

<sup>1</sup> Holmwood's report, enclosed in Prideaux to Derby, 24. xi. 74: F.O. 84. 1400.

<sup>2</sup> C. to Derby, 4. iii. 74: F.O. 84. 1407. The Central Railway, built in 1905 to 1914, now runs from Dar-es-Salaam to Kigoma, near Ujiji, through Tabora more or less along the line Cameron contemplated.

<sup>3</sup> E. S. to D., 31. vii. 75: F.O. 84. 1417.



Pemba, the sea trade was dead. Clearly another assault was needed. Somehow or other the land-trade, on which incidentally the Pemba traffic depended, had also to be killed.

One method of killing it was direct British intervention. Just as British cruisers had stopped the slave dhows at sea, so British troops could stop the slave gangs on land. The occupation of a port on the coast had been recommended, it will be remembered, to the Select Committee of 1871 by Admirals Heath and Hillyar, but opposed by Frere.<sup>1</sup> The idea was now revived by Holmwood who proposed that Mombasa should be garrisoned with British troops and a British vice-consul stationed there so as to cut the land route where it crossed the creeks behind the island.<sup>2</sup> Such an establishment would also serve for the protection of the new settlement for freed slaves at the C.M.S. Mission at Rabai and for preventing British Indians at Mombasa from a surreptitious resumption of slave holding.<sup>3</sup> The same idea was aired in the House of Commons where disappointment at the apparent failure of the Treaty had shown itself from time to time since it was signed.<sup>4</sup> In the course of debates on the subject in July 1875 and April 1876 direct British intervention on the coast in one form or another was advocated by three speakers. Mr. Ashley called for 'the establishment of a British possession north of Zanzibar'. It would constitute an asylum for freed slaves and 'a post of observation so that no caravan could go north without the cognisance of the British authorities'. It might be 'very small', and it could be purchased, no doubt, from the Sultan.<sup>5</sup> Sir John Kennaway also recommended a freedmen's settlement on the coast and cited Kirk as approving of it. He was backed by Sir Robert Anstruther; Mombasa should be the place, he said, and British troops should be garrisoned there to prevent slaves being taken northwards.<sup>6</sup>

The proposal to annex Mombasa as a means of abolishing the Slave Trade had been made three times before—in 1824, 1838, and 1871. This fourth time the result was the same. 'The House', said Mr. Bourke, Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs,

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 167-9, above.

<sup>2</sup> H.'s Report, as cited on preceding page.

<sup>3</sup> Euan Smith to Derby, 26. vii. 75: F.O. 84. 1416.

<sup>4</sup> In 1874 a questioner was assured that the existing naval patrol of five ships had been increased to seven together with a specially equipped depot-ship for Zanzibar. *Hansard*, 13. vii. 74, ccxx. 1520.

<sup>5</sup> *Hansard*, 8. vii. 75, ccxxv. 1165.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 4. iv. 76, xxviii. 1216-31.

'would hesitate a long while before it consented to establish a regular British settlement on the east coast, and certainly the Government were not prepared to do it now.'<sup>1</sup>

If direct British action were ruled out, could the Trade be killed by indirect action? Kirk, who happened to be in England in 1875, believed so. If the Sultan could be persuaded to use his authority throughout his dominions on the mainland as boldly and wholeheartedly as he had used it under the Treaty at his ports, if he would forbid the Trade by land as well as by sea, then, with the British Government supporting him, the setback since 1873 could be wiped out and the Trade, except for a little stray smuggling, really ended. Lord Derby accepted this opinion and instructed Kirk to do what he could with Barghash on his return to Zanzibar.<sup>2</sup> The result was quick and gratifying. In sharp contrast with his conduct in 1873 Barghash was willing to do all he was asked. In the first place, when Kirk told him that the Trade would fast spread northwards along the Somali coast if Slavery itself continued there, he posted a proclamation, dated January 15, 1876, at all the ports under his authority—Kismayu, Barawa, Merka, Mogadishu and Warsheikh—decreeing the abolition of Slavery and forbidding the transit of new slaves. 'Slavery is at an end in all those parts,' he wrote to Kirk. 'Inform Lord Derby that we have done it.' Kirk did so, and added a warm appreciation of Barghash's 'coming forward so readily in answer to my appeal and taking so decided and thorough-going a course'. 'The moral effect of this, coming as the spontaneous act of a Mohammedan prince, will be felt throughout the East.'<sup>3</sup> The outcome in the area directly concerned was all Kirk could have wished. A German merchant residing at Merka reported in April that the Slave Trade had ceased at all the Somali coast-towns.<sup>4</sup>

Still more important, decisive indeed, was Barghash's second step—the outlawing of the land trade. There was no need for Kirk to force this on him as the Treaty had been forced. The line Kirk took was to work on his anxiety to honour the Treaty,

<sup>1</sup> *Hansard*, 8. vii. 75, ccxxxv. 1165.

<sup>2</sup> K. to Wylde, 6. v. 76: F.O. 84. 1453.

<sup>3</sup> K. to D., 15. xii. 75, enclosing B. to K., of same date: F.O. 84. 1417. Text of B.'s Proclamation, enclosed in K. to D., 2. ii. 76: F.O. 84. 1452.

<sup>4</sup> K. to D., 15. iv. 76: F.O. 84. 1453.

an anxiety so patently genuine that 'it almost disarmed me'. He pointed out the accumulating evidence of smuggling into Pemba and explained how impossible it was for the naval patrol to stop it altogether. Could the Treaty, then, be honoured unless the land trade, which alone made this smuggling across the narrow channel possible, were prohibited like the sea trade? A nasty incident strengthened Kirk's hand. Three Arabs in a dhow containing over 100 slaves fired on the officer and crew of a boat from H.M.S. *London* sent to seize it. They missed, were caught, and were handed over to Barghash for punishment. A few days later Kirk thought the time was ripe for bringing the issue to a head. He asked Barghash to consider whether it would not be 'politic' to stop the whole business and so fulfil the real intention of the Treaty with one firm stroke of the pen. The British Government, he told him, had been informed of his 'good faith and earnest wish to do all that has been asked', and they were aware of his 'difficult and delicate position'. If, therefore, he now took the advice offered him, they would give him their 'full support'.<sup>1</sup>

'After mature and serious deliberation' Barghash yielded. Striking while the iron was hot, Kirk had asked for the prohibition of the caravan trade from the interior as well as up the coast; and had submitted two draft proclamations to that end. On April 18, 1876 Barghash signed them both.

'In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

From Barghash-bin-Said-bin-Sultan

To all whom it may concern of our friends on the  
mainland of Africa, the island of Pemba, and elsewhere.

'Whereas, in disobedience of our orders and in violation of the terms of our Treaties with Great Britain, slaves are being constantly conveyed by land from Kilwa for the purpose of being taken to the island of Pemba: Be it known that we have determined to stop and by this order do prohibit all conveyance of slaves by land under any conditions. And we have instructed our Governors on the coast to seize and imprison those found disobeying this order and to confiscate their slaves.'

'Whereas slaves are being brought down from the lands of Nyasa, of the Yao, and other parts to the coast, and there sold to

<sup>1</sup> K. to D., 20. iv. 76, enclosing K. to B.: F.O. 84. 1453.

dealers who take them to Pemba against our orders and the terms of the Treaties with Great Britain: Be it known that we forbid the arrival of slave caravans from the interior and the fitting out of slave caravans by our subjects, and have given orders to our Governors accordingly, and that all slaves arriving at the coast will be confiscated.'<sup>1</sup>

In its legal aspect these Proclamations ended the long conflict with the East African Slave Trade which had begun with the 'Moresby Treaty' of 1822.<sup>2</sup> The whole of the Slave Trade in East Africa was now outlawed. Kirk described the mail which took the news home as 'certainly the most important I have ever sent from Zanzibar'. The Proclamations, he told Lord Derby, were 'the most effectual step yet taken' to stop the annual slave-raids which were steadily depopulating Central Africa and making its regeneration 'more hopeless and far distant year by year'.<sup>3</sup>

## 3

The Proclamations in themselves, Kirk was careful to explain, could no more stop the Trade than the Treaty in itself. In each case it was necessary that the authority behind the written word should be strong enough to enforce its execution. In each case that authority was the Sultan's. But, whereas the British navy was the main instrument for executing the Treaty, the enforcement of the Proclamations would depend mainly on the Arabs—on the loyalty of the Governors at the coast-towns and on Barghash's capacity to support them in giving effect to what Kirk called 'the most unpopular step' which a ruler of Zanzibar had ever taken. The Sultan, Kirk informed the Foreign Office, 'stands alone'. 'His people to a man are against him and simply yield to the inevitable. His Governors, ill paid, are open to other influences and have for the most part been themselves too often engaged in the traffic to look on it as a crime.' 'We must remember', he wrote again, 'that throughout the thousand miles of coast included in the Sultan's dominions there is not a house that

<sup>1</sup> Arabic texts with Swahili and English translations enclosed in K. to D., 28. iv. 76: F.O. 84. 1453. English text: S.P. lxvii (1875-6), 455-6.

<sup>2</sup> See *East Africa and its Invaders*, 215.

<sup>3</sup> K. to D., 20. iv. 76; K. to Wylde, 6. v. 76: F.O. 84. 1453.

is not more or less affected by the new Proclamation.' No previous order of the Sultan's, moreover, had been so widely made known: never before, therefore, had there been such danger of united opposition. The moral was plain. It must be made clear beyond a doubt that the Sultan's policy, which was known, of course, to be Kirk's policy, was also the British Government's policy. 'The common people do not understand fully that it is the will of the people of England that dictates the line of action all attribute to me. If we make it seen that the Sultan's authority will be maintained while he acts with us, the new concession will be a reality. Otherwise, his authority being set aside, the law will be broken, and in the end we shall be forced to take [those measures of] direct and independent interference which I hoped to have spared the Government by my present labours.'<sup>1</sup>

The test soon came. In the middle of May the Sultan received reports from the Governor and *kadis* of Kilwa that the town was 'on the verge of open rebellion'. Led by their local family chiefs, the people had combined to defy the Sultan. Only an armed guard had so far prevented them from tearing down the Proclamations. Since the garrison was only thirty strong, instant help was needed to prevent a general revolt. This news was no surprise to Kirk. He knew that Kilwa was the chief focus of the Trade. He had calculated that its dealers had recently been making a profit of at least £120,000 a year. And he realised that, while they might have hoped somehow to evade the closing of the land route, the interdict on slave caravans going inland and coming back would be easier to enforce, and, if enforced, would really destroy the Trade. Accordingly, before, as it happened, the news of trouble actually reached Zanzibar, he had sent H.M.S. *Thetis*, with the Sultan's full approval, to Kilwa by way of demonstration. This timely step was now followed up by the dispatch of over 200 of the Sultan's 'Baluchis' in one of his steamships. To clinch the matter, Kirk went himself to Kilwa with a letter from Barghash directing the Governor, Said-bin-Abdulla, to act at once on his (Kirk's) advice and to give all facilities for the use of force if necessary. He found that the appearance of the *Thetis* had just prevented an attack on the town by the slave hunters with three thousand men at their

<sup>1</sup> K. to D., 20. iv. 76; K. to Wylde, 6. v. 76: F.O. 84. 1453.

back, planned for the very next day. The arrival of the troops a little later made an armed revolt unlikely. But it would take time to convince the Kilwa 'slavers' that their occupation was really gone. Somehow or other, no doubt, the six thousand slaves, who were herded at the port at the time of the Proclamation and had been driven away in chains to the swamps of the Rufiji to avoid confiscation, would be smuggled to market. Somehow or other, too, attempts would be made to get new slaves from the interior. 'Everyone in Kilwa', Kirk wrote, 'is interested in the traffic.' The Governor himself had invested in two caravans now up-country. Goods worth £40,000 had been sent by Kilwa townsmen to stock the roadside trading-posts. No one cared for 'legitimate' trade when slaves could be sold in Pemba at four times their normal price. The total lawful trade of the year at Kilwa amounted to 108,000 dollars' worth of ivory and tobacco, while in a neighbouring area near Cape Delgado a new trade in india-rubber had sprung up worth 200,000 dollars a year. Clearly the utmost firmness would be needed to get the new law obeyed, and before leaving Kilwa Kirk urged the Governor to arrest all the leading men who had taken part in defying the Proclamations and deliver them over to the Sultan. On his own account he took two drastic steps. He arrested the leader of a caravan which had arrived from Lake Nyasa since the issue of the Proclamations and sent him for trial to Zanzibar: and, since it was evident that all caravans were equipped by means of advances from the local Indian merchants, he issued a notice to the effect that he would not countenance any action brought in court to recover such advances.<sup>1</sup>

A week or so later there was a riot at Mombasa. A crowd, some hundreds strong, collected and threatened to attack the C.M.S. station, Frere Town, where freed slaves were harboured and trained for employment as wage-earners. But it was not only the *mzungu*, the 'white men', that the ringleaders denounced: it was the Governor of Mombasa, too, and the Sultan himself. The main cause of the trouble, in fact—so Kirk reported—was 'the blow given to Slavery' by the Proclamations. Mombasa, however, was not Kilwa. The rioters were mostly low-class Swahili. The Arabs of standing backed the law; and the Gover-

<sup>1</sup> K. to D., 18. v. and 1. vi. 76: F.O. 84. 1453.

## THE POLICY OF ABOLITION: ON LAND

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nor, Ali-bin-Nasur, had no difficulty in dispersing the crowd with his troops.<sup>1</sup>

There was one more incident. Early in August the Governor of the Benadir (the Somali coast), Salim-al-Yakubi, was attacked on the march between Merka and Mogadishu by Somali from the neighbouring inland plain. Salim and fifty of his men were killed. Acts of violence had occurred in that area often enough before; but Kirk had no doubt that this particular act was due to the Proclamations. Salim had zealously enforced both the abolition of Slavery and the prohibition of the Trade by land and sea. From the beginning of the year no slaves at all had entered the Benadir. 'Nowhere', said Kirk, 'has the Sultan's authority in this respect been better maintained.' Happily the revolt did not spread. Kismayu and Barawa were not threatened. Mogadishu was protected by its walls and garrison, but the Somali closed in on Merka and cut off its inland trade till in November Barghash dispatched two steamships and several hundred soldiers to relieve it.<sup>2</sup>

From that time, it may be said, the Arab Slave Trade as a regular organised business was dead. Now and again, here and there, it tried to come to life again. At Kilwa an attempt was made in 1877 to re-open the Trade from Lake Nyasa which Kirk's intervention had stopped. Holmwood, sent down to investigate, reported that the Governor was the chief culprit both as a trader on his own account and as a receiver of bribes from others. He had himself succeeded in bringing down about 800 slaves from the interior. On the other hand, the 'banyans' had taken Kirk's warning to heart and now refused to give credit to any slave-dealers. The india-rubber trade, moreover, had now begun to attract the Kilwa merchants. 'There was a struggle going on between the Slave Trade and legitimate commerce.'<sup>3</sup> In such a balanced situation firm action might decide the issue, and on Kirk's advice Barghash took it. Though Said-bin-Abdulla was an Arab of position, a member indeed of the Sultan's family, and though there was no tangible proof of his complicity in the Trade, Barghash dismissed him from his post and

<sup>1</sup> K. to D., 7. vi. 76, enclosing Price to K., 24 and 25. v. 76: F.O. 84. 1453.

<sup>2</sup> K. to D., 16. viii. and 1. xi. 76: K.P. Vb, 560, 601.

<sup>3</sup> K. to D., 5. ii. 77: F.O. 84. 1484.

ordered him to leave Kilwa. A few weeks later there was a dramatic sequel. A gang of thirteen slaves were marched from Kilwa to Tanga and there shipped for Pemba, but were forced by contrary winds to put in at Pangani. Since the Proclamation was clearly being violated, the Governor of Pangani seized the gang and the 'confidential slaves' or owner's agents who were in charge of them, and sent them to Zanzibar. Having taken evidence from them himself, Kirk brought the party before the Sultan. He was sitting, as it happened, in public *baraza* or *darbar*, and near him sat Said-bin-Abdulla, who on his return from Kilwa had ignored the scandal of his dismissal and taken the place to which his rank entitled him at court. When the agents confessed to the Sultan that they were Said's agents and the thirteen slaves his slaves, when it also appeared that this was not the first occasion they had defied the law at their master's bidding, the unmasking of the culprit was complete. At once Kirk asked that he pay the penalty. Barghash assented: and straightway, in the middle of the *darbar*, Said was arrested, put in irons, and consigned to the common jail.

'No doubt [Kirk reported later], in thus acting towards Said-bin-Abdulla and treating him as no other than a common criminal, His Highness pushed his authority to the utmost . . . but, since then, beyond a few angry remarks, personal rather to myself than to the Sultan, nothing has happened; and it is now understood that slave dealing is an offence not to be passed over because of rank or family influence.'<sup>1</sup>

All down the coast this lesson made its mark. 'The summary and utter ruin that attended Said's conviction', Kirk wrote six months later, 'gave the Traffic a blow from which it has not yet recovered.'<sup>2</sup>

It never did recover. Smuggling, as Kirk had foretold, went on sporadically, and various measures were taken to check it. It was mainly for that purpose that Barghash, as will presently appear, recruited a new native army under a British commanding officer,<sup>3</sup> and that Kirk secured the appointment of British vice-consuls at Kilwa, Mombasa, Lamu, and other ports and of

<sup>1</sup> K. to D., 26. ii. 77: F.O. 84. 1484.

<sup>2</sup> K. to D., 24. viii. 77: F.O. 84. 1486.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*



a consular agent at distant Ujiji.<sup>1</sup> By such measures, together with the continued vigilance of the naval patrol, smuggling could be kept within narrow bounds, but not completely stopped. Slave-dhows were still caught from time to time. Even when the coast had come under European 'protection' and administration, Arabs still tried to play the old hazardous game for a few years longer. The last known case of a slave-dhow in mid-East African waters occurred in 1899.<sup>2</sup> But for twenty years before that the Slave Trade as a regular, seasonal, methodical, expanding business, constituting the main interest and livelihood of a certain class of Arabs and their dependents, financed on a big scale by Indian firms, had come to an end. And, as Wilberforce and Buxton and Livingstone each in his day foretold, the end of the Slave Trade had meant the growth of 'legitimate' commerce. Striking evidence of this was furnished by Holmwood's report in 1880 on the southern section of the coast—the section where the Trade had been most rife. At Kilwa the Trade was now quite dead and yet the place was actually more prosperous. 'India-rubber is now the principal export, though cereals and sesamum seed bid fair to rival it in importance, and the trade in copal is reviving rapidly. . . . Everywhere in the Indian quarters substantial stone buildings are replacing the old mud and stub shops and houses. All the merchants, moreover, now possess plantations of their own. . . . The improvement in the attitude of the people is equally marked. In fact, both British and Arab subjects have at last become convinced, through the all-powerful logic of a full pocket, that, after all, Great Britain was furthering their real interests in insisting on the total suppression of the Slave Trade.' It was the same at the other southern ports—Tungi, Kiunga, Mikindani, Sudi, Lindi, Mchinga and Kiswere. 'The india-rubber trade, which four

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Hore of L.M.S. at Ujiji: K. to Salisbury, 27. ii. 80: F.O. 84. 1574; F.O. to K., 21. v. 80: F.O. 84. 1573. C. S. Smith at Kilwa, K. to Granville, 9. v. 84: K.P. Xb, 184. D. C. Haggard at Lamu, K. to G., 16. iii. 84: K.P. Xb, 161. C. E. Gissing at Mombasa, K. to G., 23. ix. 84: F.O. 84. 1678.

<sup>2</sup> See *East Africa and its Invaders*, 290 note. There was a transient revival of slave-selling in the Malindi district in 1884 when, owing to drought and famine, the Giryama people began to sell their slaves and children. But this was not the Slave Trade in the old sense. No 'raw' slaves were brought in from outside. K. to Granville, 23. ix. 84: F.O. 84. 1678. Child-selling in time of famine occurred in more than one district in later years.

years ago had no existence in this district, but which sprang up immediately the suppression of the Slave Trade was accomplished, has worked a complete revolution in its commerce. . . . Last year's export was variously estimated at from 500 to 830 tons. . . . The production of grain and oil-seeds has also increased in an extraordinary manner. . . . The improvement in the position of British subjects is especially marked; they have become a body of honest traders instead of depending on illicit gains.<sup>1</sup>

### 4

History must award the honour for this final overthrow of the Arab Slave Trade in the first place to two men—Livingstone who did most to inspire the attack, Kirk who did most to carry it through. But a measure of credit is also due to a third man, an Arab. Barghash's motives were not Livingstone's or Kirk's. Left to himself, he would no more have thought of abolishing the Slave Trade than his father before him. He only acquiesced in it, after long and obstinate resistance, because he was convinced by Kirk that the British people meant it to be done. They would do it, he came to realise, whether he helped them or not. If he did help them, he would have to risk the deep resentment of his own subjects; but, if he did not help them, he would lose the friendship of a nation strong enough to protect, if it so wished, his throne and independence from revolution or invasion, and pursuing, it seemed, no interests in East Africa which, except in this one matter of the Slave Trade, conflicted with his own. So, confronted with the same alternatives as his father, he made the same choice. He made it when at last he signed the Treaty of 1873, and he confirmed it when he signed the Proclamations of 1876. Thenceforward, in the spirit as in the letter, he kept his promises. No one knew that better than Kirk and no one more emphatically asserted it. It so happened that in 1883 Barghash's sincerity was impugned by Colonel S. B. Miles, Resident at Muscat, who was acting as consul-general at Zanzibar while Kirk was on leave in England. Miles pointed out that the Sultan's authority had now been so much strengthened that he could prevent, if he wished, such occasional slave-smuggling as

<sup>1</sup> H. to K., 30. i. 80, enclosed in K. to Salisbury, 6. iii. 80; F.O. 84. 1574.

still went on. 'His Highness' spasmodic and ostentatious efforts are more indicative of a desire to attract favourable notice than of an honest resolve to sweep away the Slave Trade.' Miles, in fact, was as distrustful of Barghash as Rigby had been of Majid. Kirk's ire was roused. It cannot be assumed, he wrote, that 'the Sultan is actuated in all he does by the same disinterested and philanthropic motives which move us'; but that is no evidence that he has not loyally and sincerely helped to carry out our policy. 'It is too well known', he added, 'that between Colonel Miles and the Sultan there exists such a want of confidence and sympathy as must be very detrimental to the influence on which so much of our success depends.' Kirk could be loyal too.<sup>1</sup>

It would be a narrow view, however, that regarded the abolition of the Arab Slave Trade as an achievement of individuals. 'It is the will of the people of England that dictates the line of action.' Livingstone evoked and Kirk responded to a revival of the British humanitarian tradition. In plain fact the British people had come to the rescue of the African people on the east of the continent as in earlier days on the west. And this was far the most important fact in the history of East Africa up to this time. The vast majority of East Africans had not been sensibly affected, save in one respect alone, by the coming of Asiatics and Europeans to their coast. Gold and ivory seekers, traders in cloth and beads and wire, soldiers at the ports, preachers of Christianity or Islam had made no deep mark on the interior. Only the Slave Trade had done that, particularly in one wide area of which Lake Nyasa and Lake Tanganyika were the focal points. Year in, year out, from the dawn of history Africans had been taken away from their inland homes, some to work on the coast, far more to market oversea. And for every African so taken alive, other Africans had been killed. It is impossible to reckon, however roughly, the numbers that crossed the Indian Ocean to a life of slavery in nearer Asia, to man the slave armies of Irak and Bengal, to till the soil and stock the harems of Egypt, Arabia, Persia. But the process went on for about two thousand years before it was accelerated by the more intensive and better organised exploitation of East Africa which followed from Seyyid Said's transfer of his capital from Muscat to Zanzibar in 1840. Thenceforward it is possible at least to guess the figures.

<sup>1</sup> Miles to Granville, 1. iii. 83; K. to G., 14. iv. 83; F.O. 84. 1644.

About 1870 it may be moderately estimated—Livingstone would have put it higher—that the annual loss of Africans to East Africa by enslavement and the slaughter it occasioned was from 80,000 to 100,000. By that time, moreover, slave raiding had come to mean the devastation as well as the depopulation of the countryside. Both the man-power and the productive capacity of wide areas of the African interior west of Kilwa and Zanzibar were being steadily reduced. That is what the British people stopped, and wrote thereby another of those few, those very few, 'virtuous pages' in the history of nations. It was the only real service, apart from sporadic missionary efforts on the coast, which any of the peoples of Europe, Asia and America had yet done to the people of East Africa, and it was a service of immeasurable value.

PART II

THE INTERNATIONAL SCRAMBLE



## XII

### THE NEW SULTANATE

(1873-1885)

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#### I

The measures which Barghash took to stop the Slave Trade were not only highly unpopular with his Arab subjects: they were at variance with constitutional tradition. As applied to the Arab sheikhs of Zanzibar, indeed, the word 'subjects' had been hitherto a misnomer. International diplomacy accorded Barghash the title of Sultan and treated him as a sovereign prince; but the Arabs addressed him, as they addressed other leading men, merely as 'Seyyid' or 'lord'. As Frere observed in 1873, he exercised no absolute authority in dealing with 'any of the great Arab families or their dependents'. 'In all that concerns them he is not sovereign but only *primus inter pares*.'<sup>1</sup> He was a patriarch, so to speak, rather than a monarch. A striking illustration of this 'fundamental system of government among the Arabs', as Kirk called it, is afforded by the status which one particular Arab notable had acquired. Suliman-bin-Hamed was born about 1785 of the Al-bu-Said family. As a young man he had served Seyyid Said's predecessor, Sultan-bin-Ahmed, and in Said's reign he had attained a position of unique authority. Hamerton reported about 1850 that Suliman was the only man at Zanzibar 'who interfered in affairs of government'. He was 'a kind good sort of person', and had 'much influence with the pagan chiefs on the coast of Africa'.<sup>2</sup> Said died, and Majid died, and Suliman, now nearing ninety, was still the power behind the throne. 'He took an active part', wrote Kirk, 'in everything that passed

<sup>1</sup> Memorandum on the position of the Sultan, 17. iv. 73, enclosed in F. to G., 7. v. 73; K.P. IIIa, 186.

<sup>2</sup> *East Africa and its Invaders*, 323, 356-7.

at Zanzibar within the memory of the oldest inhabitant,' and his influence over the Arabs and Swahili of the coast-towns was 'above that of the Sultan himself'. On ceremonial occasions, indeed, Barghash yielded precedence to him as the father of his house. To Kirk, who had found out more about him than Hamerton had, he seemed a sinister old figure. Reactionary, self-seeking, corrupt, a confirmed slave-dealer in earlier days with Bourbon and even Brazil, he had always favoured French interests and opposed British. One can guess the part he played in stiffening Barghash's attitude to Frere. One can guess, too, what his feelings were at those council meetings at which Kirk presented the British ultimatum. As it happened, he died six months after the signing of the Treaty. 'His loss', Kirk said, 'is little to be regretted,' and that, no doubt, was Barghash's opinion too.<sup>1</sup>

Suliman's death coincided with the change in the character of Barghash's rule. When he began to enforce the Treaty, still more when, by his own unilateral act and not merely to fulfil a treaty promise, he issued the Proclamations, he was assuming and exercising 'a personal authority unknown before'.<sup>2</sup> The man who broke so eminent a personage as Said-bin-Abdulla for disobeying him was no longer *primus inter pares*. He was more like a sovereign now, and the others more like his subjects. But it must not be supposed that those others accepted this new development as legitimate or lasting. They only acquiesced in it because they knew that Barghash in this matter of the Slave Trade had become the instrument of British policy, because they saw Kirk at Barghash's side. From the moment, therefore, that the Treaty was signed Kirk constantly insisted that the British Government, both in justice to the Sultan and in their own interests, must do all they could to strengthen his authority. Without unmistakable British support, he was convinced, the new *régime* would quickly come to an end.

It was these considerations that led Kirk to look more favourably on Barghash's desire to visit England. He had virtually for-

<sup>1</sup> K. to Granville, 10. xii. 73: K.P. IV. 30.

<sup>2</sup> K. to Derby, 24. viii. 77: K.P. VIa, 167. As to Barghash's previous status Kirk echoes Frere (whose account was doubtless based on Kirk's information): 'He stood almost as an equal among the heads of the various Arab families.'



bidden it, as has been seen, in 1873; and in 1875 there were still obvious disadvantages, if not dangers, in Barghash's absence from Zanzibar, especially as he insisted on Kirk accompanying him. But the risk seemed worth taking if his reception in England should serve to confirm his willingness to co-operate with the British Government and to convince his subjects that he could count on that Government's support. The formalities were accordingly arranged. Barghash was informed by Lord Derby that the Queen welcomed his proposal to come to England. The visit, it was understood, would be personal rather than official. While the Sultan would be the guest of Government, he would not be received with royal state.<sup>1</sup> At Zanzibar, after anxious consideration, Ali-bin-Soud was chosen to act as regent during the Sultan's absence. Two or three other notables, who were too influential and untrustworthy to be left behind, were included in the Sultan's suite. Kirk's place was taken by Major C. B. Euan Smith who had been Frere's private secretary in 1873. If the Regent were careful 'not to give occasion for any excitement' and were 'backed up' by the British Consulate, Kirk hoped that all would be well.<sup>2</sup>

On May 9 the party left Zanzibar for England by way of Aden and the Suez Canal. At Lisbon Barghash was greeted by the guns of the British Channel Squadron and received by the King of Portugal. On June 15 he reached Gravesend, and, proceeding up the river by launch, he was welcomed at the Westminster Palace steps by Bourke, Wylde, Frere, and other distinguished persons, including Dr. Badger, whose experience as an interpreter was as useful as his old friendship with Barghash. Six weeks of ceremony and entertainment and sightseeing ensued. Barghash visited the Queen at Windsor and the Prince of Wales at Marlborough House. Deputations from the Universities' Mission to Central Africa and the Church Missionary Society waited on him. He was taken to Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester and Brighton. He inspected Woolwich Arsenal, Aldershot Camp, the General Post Office and the British Museum. In lighter moments he attended Ascot race-week and performances of *Lohengrin*, *Acis and Galatea*, and *Bluebeard*. He was the guest of honour at various social and minis-

<sup>1</sup> D. to Prideaux, 19. ix. 74, enclosing D. to B., of same date: K.P. IV. 106.

<sup>2</sup> K. to D., 9. iv. 75: K.P. Va, 136.

terial functions—dinners, balls, garden-parties. Finally he was given the freedom of the City at the Guildhall and a banquet at the Mansion House. His frequent appearances in public made him quite a popular figure, and wherever he went he seems to have been liked and respected. On one occasion, when the choir at the Crystal Palace stood up to sing, Barghash with Arab courtesy rose also, and that brought the whole vast audience to its feet. The many speeches he was obliged to make, duly interpreted by Badger, were all brief and all in the same vein. 'How can I help it?' he exclaimed at the Mansion House. 'It is the fault of the English people. You all welcome me. You all tell me I have done something for the abolition of the Slave Trade and you hope I shall do more. What can I say but thank you, thank you, thank you?'<sup>1</sup>

Barghash left England on July 15 for Paris where he spent ten days, and then made for home by way of Egypt where he met the Khedive. On September 19, Kirk still faithfully beside him, he got back to Zanzibar.

Kirk's hopes had been realised. No unpleasant incident had occurred in his absence, and the tour had fully justified the risk that had been taken. Barghash, who had previously had little notion of what England or the English people were like, now understood something of the wealth and the strength, the personalities and the public sentiment, of the nation with which he and his realm had become so closely linked. And the leading sheikhs of Zanzibar who formed his suite had seen and heard what he had seen and heard. Reports of it all, some of them doubtless highly coloured, were soon spreading about the island and along the coast; and it was a very disgruntled or fanatical Arab in whose eyes the Sultan had not acquired a new prestige.<sup>2</sup>

But prestige to endure must have power behind it, and in 1875

<sup>1</sup> *The Times* at various dates from June 4 to July 15. R. N. Lyne, *Zanzibar in Contemporary Times* (London, 1905), 92-5. While he was in London, Barghash signed (14. vii. 75) a short supplementary treaty to that of 1873, providing that ships carrying slaves other than those in attendance on their masters or employed in navigation should be deemed as being engaged in the Slave Trade. Text in *S.P.* lxvi (1874-5), 89.

<sup>2</sup> In the following year (1876) Barghash was invited by the Viceroy to attend the *darbar* of Indian Princes to be held at Delhi to proclaim Queen Victoria Empress of India: but the invitation came too late to be accepted. K. to D., 15. xi. 76: K.P. Vb, 603.



SEYYID BARGHASH  
with his suite in England in 1875



that power was still lacking. The fleet was gone. The 'Baluchis' were poor soldiers, and, if Barghash's authority were seriously challenged, their allegiance might well be shifted to another paymaster. Barghash, in fact, was attempting to govern without the first requirement of any government—a loyal and efficient force under its own control to make sure at need that its orders are obeyed. All this was clear to Kirk, and the logic of it was underlined by the events of 1875 and 1876. Violations or evasions of the Proclamations could not always be prevented, nor incipient rebellion checked, by the hasty dispatch of a British cruiser as at Mombasa in 1875 or at Kilwa in 1876.<sup>1</sup> British force must remain, no doubt, in the background and be used on occasion; but its regular use as a means of executing the Sultan's will was precisely what the new policy was meant to avoid. In the only matter they cared about, the final suppression of the Slave Trade, the British Government were to get their way by working through Barghash, not over his head. And so, in the course of 1877, Kirk persuaded Barghash that he must obtain a better military instrument. In a cogent dispatch he reminded the Foreign Office that, since 1873, the Sultan had had to act alone and against the wishes of his subjects. 'Having once taken a decided course in this respect, His Highness has never wavered in his personal endeavours to give effect to all he engaged to do, but it has become obvious to him that, while he depends on Arab mercenaries, his authority will be small. . . . I have tried lately to convince His Highness that the time has passed when he can trust to such undisciplined and lawless bands of foreigners as now compose his troops, and endeavoured to persuade him to raise a Negro force well armed and disciplined on the European system, on whom he can better depend. . . .'<sup>2</sup>

A start was made with a battalion of 300 men, and in Lieutenant Lloyd William Mathews of H.M.S. *London*, then at Zanzibar, the ideal man was found to organise and train them. Born in 1850, the second son of William Mathews of Castle Cary in Somerset, he entered the navy by way of the *Britannia*, and after service in the Mediterranean and on the West African coast, he joined the East African patrol in 1875. Like all his brother officers he was sickened by what he saw of the slave

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 249–50, below, and p. 227, above.

<sup>2</sup> K. to D., 17. viii. 77: K.P. VIa, 163.

dhows. To quote one of several descriptions in his letters home: 'The slaves are in a most awful state when we get at them, just stewing together, packed like herrings, and one mass of small-pox: many often dead, and they and the living cooped up as tight as they can fit in. We deal with the owner first and sort out the poor devils afterwards.'<sup>1</sup> To train a force whose main purpose was to stop this loathsome business seemed to Mathews a congenial task. He promptly volunteered for it. The consent of the Admiralty was obtained. And in a few months' time his African battalion, the first regular native force to be raised in East Africa, was already a respectable body of soldiers, dressed in white trousers, short black jacket and red fez, drilling with dummy wooden muskets, and obeying smartly enough the English words of command. Mathews, indeed, had exactly the gifts needed for his job—natural leadership, courage in action, firmness in discipline, and, most important, a kindly understanding of Africans. 'His troops', says his biographer who was with him later on at Zanzibar, 'became his children.'<sup>2</sup>

Kirk's plea that the British Government should encourage the creation of this African army, on grounds of expediency as well as of honour, was accepted; and the Foreign Office, now in Lord Salisbury's charge, took the opportunity of showing in a most appropriate manner the British Government's appreciation of 'the loyalty and good faith with which His Highness has carried out his treaty engagements with this country for the suppression of the Slave Trade in his dominions'. In the spring of 1878, a gift of 500 Snider rifles with bayonets and a supply of ammunition together with seven Whitworth guns was dispatched to Zanzibar. Barghash, of course, was delighted. 'Tell your Government', he wrote to Kirk, that 'we are overwhelmed with the consideration shown to us.'<sup>3</sup>

The new force grew rapidly. When Admiral Corbett reviewed it at the Sultan's request in the autumn of 1878, it was 500 strong. In 1880 Mathews wrote home, 'I have now 1,300 soldiers and hope to recruit 2,000.'<sup>4</sup> In the following year the efficiency of the force was tested in the suppression of the trouble

<sup>1</sup> R. N. Lyne, *An Apostle of Empire, being the life of Sir Lloyd William Mathews, K.C.M.G.* (London, 1936), 41.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

<sup>3</sup> F.O. to K., 12. iv. 78; B. to K., 31. v. 78; K.P. VIb, 360, 410.

<sup>4</sup> Lyne, 47.

in Pemba to be presently recounted. Holmwood officially commended 'the steadiness, good behaviour and patient endurance of the Sultan's native force' on that occasion,<sup>1</sup> and Miles wrote to the Foreign Office of 'the almost unbounded influence he [Mathews] appears to possess over the force he commands'.<sup>2</sup> Some months earlier in 1881, Mathews' three years' leave from the Admiralty being up, he had retired from the navy and taken permanent service under the Sultan with the title of 'General'. He gave the rest of his life to Zanzibar. When he died in 1901 he had served under five successive Sultans, and from 1891, when Zanzibar became a British Protectorate with a new constitution, he had filled the post of First Minister. From first to last his relations with Barghash were as close and cordial as Kirk's; and it was a remarkable stroke of fortune that the new Sultanate should be aided and upheld by a second Briton no less loyal than the first. The one was a servant of Britain, the other of Zanzibar. But, while the difference was strictly marked in form, it was small enough in fact. For just as Kirk could be a faithful friend and adviser to the Sultan, so Mathews could be his faithful servant as well as a British patriot for the simple reason that from 1873 onwards the interests of Zanzibar and Britain were identical. A front place on the stage of African history should be reserved for this remarkable man.<sup>3</sup>

If 'Mathews' army' supplied the primary need of the new *régime*, it must not be supposed that the authority which Barghash increasingly enjoyed from 1878 onwards was wholly due to the fact that he could now impose it. Once sure of getting his own way, Barghash soon proved himself an energetic and enlightened ruler. He maintained the high standard of justice which he had restored at the outset of his reign. He used his growing revenues from customs-duties and his own estates—like his father, he was the largest land-owner in the island—for promoting long-needed public works and services. He provided the town of Zanzibar with a free supply of pure water. He lit the chief streets. He instituted a regular police force. He ran a line of steamships, of which by 1882 he had purchased four, in competition with the British India Company, and, in order to frus-

<sup>1</sup> K.P. VIII. 100.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> For details see Mr. Lyne's interesting biography, cited above.

trate the 'ring' of 'banyan' business-men, he used them for importing grain and so reduced the price of food. All this made a deep impression on public opinion. 'His Highness', reported Kirk in 1881, 'is a most popular prince. . . . He has done much for the good of his people.' Only, indeed, in the humanitarian field were his actions criticised. The Arabs never approved, they only acquiesced in, his measures against the Slave Trade. They did not like his seeming to accept the end of Slavery as inevitable. He was ahead of public opinion when he freed the *Mukhadim*, the original native population of the island, from their semi-serfdom and remitted the tribute they had paid for generations past. But if all that philanthropic side of their Sultan's policy was still distasteful to the Arabs, it was no longer resented so fiercely as it once had been; for, as Kirk had hoped, it was more and more recognised as being unavoidable because the British people willed it. As time went on, therefore, it ceased to impair Barghash's popularity or weaken his authority. On that point at any rate Miles' opinion of him agreed with Kirk's. Writing in 1883, he recalled the time when the Sultan had been dependent on his family, on other leading Arabs, on the Mlawas. 'All this is now changed. . . . He has succeeded in consolidating his rule and raising himself to an independent position. There is no public voice to oppose him. He is strong enough to stand alone; and, being naturally of an aggressive and arbitrary disposition, he has shaken off all his former trammels and has made his will the law and practically the only law in the land.'<sup>1</sup>

## 2

This steady growth of Barghash's prestige and power was not confined to Zanzibar. His position on the mainland was also strengthened.

It needed strengthening; for his overlordship at the Arab ports, tenuous as it was at the outset of his reign, had been still further weakened by that loss of almost all his fleet in the hurricane of 1872.<sup>2</sup> Unable now to threaten a disaffected town with

<sup>1</sup> K. to Granville, 5. v. 81: K.P. VIII. 255; M. to G., 27. ix. 82: K.P. IX. 246; M. to G., 1. iii. 83: K.P. Xa, 125.

<sup>2</sup> Opinions of Frere and Consul Schultz: F. to Granville, 10 and 25. iii. 73: K.P. IIIa, 150.



bombardment or blockade, relying only on his 'Baluchis' to enforce his will, it was only within a narrow range of Zanzibar that Barghash was Sultan in more than name.<sup>1</sup> Of Warsheikh, the most northerly port in his dominions Holmwood reported after a visit in 1874: 'This place is claimed by the Sultan, but he is in no way recognised either by the chief or people.'<sup>2</sup> There was no Governor there nor any troops. Of the next port southwards, Mogadishu, Kirk wrote in 1873: 'The claim of the Sultan to jurisdiction is the veriest sham imaginable. His flag was displayed on our arrival, but he has neither influence nor power.'<sup>3</sup> A year later Holmwood found a new Governor installed with a garrison of 180 'Baluchis'; but their hold on the place seemed 'very precarious'.<sup>4</sup> At Merka and Barawa, likewise, there were Governors and garrisons, 150 strong in 1874 at the former town, now growing in commercial importance, and 27 at the latter. But the Somali who formed at least four-fifths of their inhabitants were still more dependent on the neighbouring Somali chiefs of the interior than on the distant Sultan at Zanzibar.<sup>5</sup> Barghash was not even able to ensure the fulfilment of those provisions in his treaties with European Powers which entitled their nationals to travel, trade and settle anywhere in the Sultan's dominions. Thus, while three or four Moslem British Indians were permitted by the Somali to live at Barawa, any Hindu British Indian who had dared to settle there would have been killed.<sup>6</sup> Nor were Europeans safe, however close their ties with Zanzibar and whatever 'passport' they might carry from the Sultan. The von der Decken tragedy had occurred inland, and it was scarcely to be expected that the murderers in that case could be brought to justice; but when in 1874 a certain Arthur Heale, an Englishman employed at Barawa as agent of the Hamburg firm of Hansing and Co., was murdered by two casual Somali, it was rather more surprising that the Governor was unable to do anything about it.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> H.'s report, enclosed in H. to Prideaux, 17. xi. 74: K.P. Va, 14.

<sup>3</sup> K. to Granville, 31. v. 73: K.P. II. 43.

<sup>4</sup> H.'s report, *loc. cit.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* Holmwood gives a pathetic account of Heale's end. He was a wholly inoffensive person, so timid or good-natured that he had submitted to the most outrageous insults and extortions at the hands of the Somali. He seems never to have refused a demand for money, goods, food or any-

The next stretch of coast, between the River Juba and Lamu, was a little more responsive to control from Zanzibar. It was mainly occupied by the Bajun, a half-Somali, half-Swahili tribe, whose head chief or sheikh, Mzee Seif, had accepted Barghash's overlordship and had been appointed Governor of Faza on that account. That this meant a measure of real subordination to Zanzibar might be suggested by the facts of another murder case. When Lieutenant M. MacCausland, R.N., in the course of a visit to Kiunga in command of one of the boats of H.M.S. *Daphne* in September 1873, was murdered during an interview with the local chief—the motive, it was thought, was resentment at the British attempts to suppress the Slave Trade—his murderer, though a relative of Mzee Seif himself, was duly arrested and handed over to Barghash who condemned him to imprisonment for life. But that justice was enforced in this case did not necessarily mean that Barghash's authority was more respected at Kiunga or Lamu than at Barawa. MacCausland, unlike Heale, was a British officer, and the Bajun were doubtless more afraid of British cruisers than of Barghash.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, whatever Mzee Seif's attitude may have been, his tribesmen recognised no other authority than his. Holmwood soon discovered when he visited them that it was an error of tact to speak of Barghash as their Sultan. 'They hinted, with some irritation of manner, that their own chief had the whole district under his foot.'<sup>2</sup>

At Lamu, where the Governor was backed by a garrison of

thing he had to give; and the Somali who drove his spear into his back as he walked along the street was apparently inspired by nothing more than blood-lust.

<sup>1</sup> K. to Granville, 11. x. 73; F.O. 84. 1376; Prideaux to Derby, 4. iv. 74; K.P. IV. 54; Holmwood's report, *loc. cit.* Prideaux told Barghash that, as the victim was in the Queen's service, the death-penalty was remitted. Said and Majid had passed sentences of death, but Barghash was deterred by religious scruples. The Foreign Office acquiesced in the sentence of life imprisonment, but, since a general release of prisoners on important occasions was a regular Arab custom, it insisted that the murderer should be imprisoned in a British penal settlement. He died in prison before the question was decided; but the opportunity was taken by the Foreign Office to lay down the rule for the future (1) that a death-penalty would only be enforced on orders from London, and (2) that life-sentences must be served in British prisons. P. to D., 4. iv. and 21. vii. 74; D. to P., 7. viii. 74; F.O. to P., 6. ix. 74; K.P. IV. 54, 86, 91, 120.

<sup>2</sup> H.'s report, *loc. cit.*

forty men, Holmwood found the same 'disaffection' towards the Sultan. Partly, however, because the Governor was personally popular with the townsfolk, partly because they lived in dread lest the neighbouring Somali tribes should forget for a moment their own eternal feuds and combine to seize and loot Lamu, there was no question of revolt.<sup>1</sup>

At Malindi, if the authority of the Sultan's Governors was more substantial, it was mainly due to fear of the Galla who, though they had hitherto kept more or less inland and never occupied the coast to the same extent as the Somali had done farther north, were now slowly moving seawards and in growing numbers taking up their quarters in the town.<sup>2</sup>

In the south the position was much the same as in the north. Barghash had his Governors and his little garrisons there and he obtained his customs-duties, but that was all. At Kilwa the Swahili chiefs and slave-hunters did what they chose. Local duties were levied on caravans coming down from the interior, and similar exactions were imposed on the resident 'banyan' traders, although in theory the taxation of trade was confined to the Sultan's five per cent. export duty.<sup>3</sup> No attempt was made to enforce the Treaty of 1845; and, as has been seen, the conclusion of the Treaty of 1873 provoked an undisguised revolt. At Lindi the Sultan could hardly be said to exercise any authority at all. The townspeople, indeed, were living in constant dread of raids by neighbouring African tribes from which their nominal overlord was powerless to protect them. When Frere cruised along that southern section of the coast as far as Cape Delgado, 'the most salient point', he reported, 'is the very slight tenure by which His Highness maintains his hold' on it.<sup>4</sup>

Along the central section of the coast from Pangani to Mombasa the Sultan's control was more effective. It lay closer to his hand. Its southern part, the Mrima, was his particular commercial preserve.<sup>5</sup> Bagamoyo, just opposite Zanzibar and only twenty miles distant, was the terminus of the main route to Tabora and Lake Tanganyika. Between Pangani and Vanga the Sultan's authority had recently been strengthened by the

<sup>1</sup> H.'s report, *loc. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> F. to G., 7. v. 73: K.P. IIIa, 187. K. to G., 29. viii. 73, enclosing report on Kilwa: K.P. II. 130.

<sup>4</sup> F. to G., 10. iii. 73: K.P. IIIa, 77.

<sup>5</sup> See p. 4, above.

death of Kimweri, 'king' of the Bantu state of Usambara, who since Seyyid Said's later years had shared with Zanzibar in a kind of dual government of the coast,<sup>1</sup> and by the strife and anarchy which ensued. North of Vanga the key to the coast was Mombasa with its famous citadel and its fine harbours. Before Said shifted his capital from Muscat to Zanzibar, Mombasa was in the hands of the old proud Arab family of the Mazrui who claimed to rule the seaboard down to Pangani; and their ejection from Fort Jesus and its occupation by Said's troops were the necessary prelude to the establishment of his new African realm.<sup>2</sup> It was highly significant, therefore, that even at Mombasa Barghash's hold was weakening in 1873. His Governor, Seif-bin-Suliman, was nominally master of the place, and his loyalty was unquestioned; but, while he resided with some 40 'Baluchis' in the town, the fort was held by the *jemadar* or commandant, a bold and ambitious Arab, Mohammed-bin-Abdulla, whose 180 soldiers, mostly from the Hadramaut, had become his personal adherents rather than the Sultan's. Since Fort Jesus dominated the town, the Governor's authority would at once become precarious if Mohammed chose to question it.<sup>3</sup>

To make matters worse, the Mazrui were once more giving trouble. Since Said had broken and dispersed them, a new generation had grown up, endowed, it seemed, with all their fathers' restiveness and recklessness and prepared to make another fight for independence.<sup>4</sup> In 1872, Mbaruk-bin-Rashid, descendant of the popular hero of an earlier day, led them into open rebellion; but, confronted by a force of 400 'Baluchis', he withdrew to a stronghold in the hills some twenty miles from the coast; and, when the troops pursued him thither, he abandoned the rebellion and swore obedience to his 'overlord'.<sup>5</sup> But this mood did not last. At the end of 1873 he again raised the standard of revolt, and again Barghash dispatched a force to quell him, as strong as in the previous year. But this time he tried to bring about a lasting settlement. He offered Mbaruk some small town on the coast for his peaceful occupation. Failing that, he bade

<sup>1</sup> See *East Africa and its Invaders*, 351.

<sup>2</sup> See *East Africa and its Invaders*, chap. ix.

<sup>3</sup> Holmwood, *loc. cit.*, and references, p. 251, note 1, below.

<sup>4</sup> For the earlier history of the Mazrui see *East Africa and its Invaders*, chaps. viii and ix.

<sup>5</sup> Note by Pelly, enclosed in Frere to Granville, 5. iv. 73; K.P. IIIa, 148.

him come and render submission at Zanzibar. Failing that, the quarrel must be fought to a finish.<sup>1</sup> Mbaruk accepted the first proposal and chose Kilifi; but Barghash now insisted that the place must be either Takaungu, where some other Mazrui had settled, or Zanzibar itself. His messengers found Mbaruk in a defiant temper. 'Come and fight me,' was his answer. Since, however, he had only a handful of followers, encamped in some huts near Malindi, with little or nothing to eat, his bluff was easily called. When the 'Baluchis' attacked, he set fire to the huts and retreated inland into the 'bush'.<sup>2</sup>

A year later, the danger inherent in the twofold control of Mombasa suddenly came to a head. On January 12, 1875, Mohammed-bin-Abdulla, whose garrison had now grown to some 350 men, lowered the red flag of Zanzibar on the fort and began to bombard the Governor's house. Under cover of this fire a body of men issued from the fort and began to loot and burn the nearest quarter of the town. Advancing farther, they were met by the Governor's troops. There was a brief but bloody combat, and then the rebels withdrew into the fort. On the next two days the work of plunder and arson within range of the fort's guns continued. On the 15th the Governor was reinforced by 200 'Baluchis' from Takaungu, and hostilities were suspended; but, as Mohammed-bin-Abdulla afterwards confessed, he was biding his time for another attack, confident that his superior strength in men, guns and position would enable him to drive out the Governor and occupy the town. If that had happened, the example of Mombasa, often followed in the past by other Arab coast-towns, would probably have been followed again. Malindi, Lamu, and other northward ports would have joined in the revolt—a revolt not only against the Sultan but also and more directly against the abolition of the Slave Trade. 'Before long a number of small piratical nests would have arisen along the coast which would have given us much trouble to suppress; for both the Sultan's unpopularity and his military weakness would have rendered any efforts on his part futile.'<sup>3</sup>

Such a *dénouement* was forestalled by British action. Kirk was away on 'sick leave' at the time, but his deputy, Prideaux, did

<sup>1</sup> Prideaux to G., 14. i. 74: K.P. IV. 37.

<sup>2</sup> P. to G., 9. ii. 74: K.P. IV. 41.

<sup>3</sup> P. to Derby, 23. i. 75: K.P. Va, 60.

what he himself would certainly have done. As soon as he heard of the outbreak, he dispatched H.M.S. *Rifleman* to Mombasa. Barghash fully concurred, for he was well aware that the British Indian community at Mombasa was the largest on the coast, that it would suffer in life and property from any attack on the town, and that he was unable himself to protect it. Indeed, when worse news came, he begged Prideaux to send another warship. Prideaux, meantime, had decided to go to Mombasa himself, and on the 17th he arrived there on board H.M.S. *Nassau*. Early next morning he sent an ultimatum to Mohammed-bin-Abdulla. If he surrendered, Prideaux would guarantee his safety and that of his followers and secure them a passage to the Hadramaut. Otherwise he would attack the fort. The answer was evasive, and Prideaux requested Captain Sullivan, the senior naval officer, to open fire. After two and a half hours of bombardment from the two ships and their 'rocket-boats', Mohammed hauled down his flag. The original terms were granted, and, next day, the 350 rebel soldiers with their wives and children—about 1,000 folk in all—were embarked with their baggage on a number of dhows. On the 20th Prideaux and Sullivan landed with a party of 200 bluejackets and formally took possession of Fort Jesus in the Sultan's name. His flag was re-hoisted under a general salute; the keys of the fort were handed over to the Governor; and the British party re-embarked, followed by Mohammed and three of his principal sheikhs under escort. In the evening of January 21 the *Rifleman* and the *Nassau* were back at Zanzibar.<sup>1</sup>

Mohammed-bin-Abdulla was permitted not only to retire himself to the estate he owned in Pemba, pending the provision of transport to the Hadramaut, but also to keep with him the whole of that large and mixed community which had been put aboard the dhows. When Kirk returned to his duties at Zanzibar in April, he found the ex-rebel solidly entrenched in the neighbouring island. 'With his men loose in Pemba', he wrote, 'he may even yet prove of greater danger to the Sultan than he was at Mombasa.' Clearly he had to be removed, especially as the time fixed for Barghash's departure for Europe was now approaching. Kirk, therefore, set to work to secure the requisite dhows without delay; and on April 28, eleven days before Barg-

<sup>1</sup> P. to D., 23. i. 75; K.P. Va, 57.

hash left, Mohammed-bin-Abdulla and his troublesome company were safely shipped away.<sup>1</sup>

If, then, Kirk was anxious as to the possible effects of Barghash's absence in Europe at Zanzibar, he was still more anxious as to what might happen on the coast. 'The whole dominion', he wrote, 'hangs together by a *vis inertiae* seemingly peculiar to the people of East Africa. It requires only the disturbing element, led by anyone of intelligence, to shiver the whole coast region into a number of isolated districts under no law.'<sup>2</sup> The elimination of Mohammed-bin-Abdulla, therefore, had been timely; and, as has been seen, no other intelligent person attempted during those dangerous months of 1875 to undermine the precarious structure of Barghash's seaboard realm. And to all appearance the sequel of his visit to England was as striking on the coast as it was at Zanzibar. The southern stretch was now more peaceful than it had ever been. Kilwa remained quietly submissive. There was no stirring of disaffection at Mombasa. Mbaruk, it seemed, had dropped his wild ambitions. And even in the independent north Barghash's authority meant more than it had meant before. Within a few months of his return from England he issued those drastic orders on the Slave Trade and Slavery in Somaliland;<sup>3</sup> and in the towns at any rate they were obeyed. When Kirk visited that part of the coast towards the end of 1875, he found Merka and Mogadishu sufficiently fortified and garrisoned to repel any possible Somali onslaught. At Merka a new sense of security had been created with manifest results in its growing trade. At Mogadishu, Barghash's Governor, with a garrison now 200 strong, had established real control, and Kirk was surprised to find how cordially he was received by the townsmen, notorious as they were for their fanatical dislike of European intruders. But there was more in this change of attitude in the north than a recognition of the Sultan's enhanced prestige and of his closer ties with Britain.<sup>4</sup> As will appear in the next chapter, the Egyptian Government were engaged, just at this time, in a sudden attempt to take forcible possession of one or more of the Somali ports. 'The fear of

<sup>1</sup> K. to D., 9. iv. 75; Holmwood to D., 27. v. 75; K.P. Va, 137, 153.

<sup>2</sup> K. to D., 9. iv. 75; K.P. Va, 136.

<sup>3</sup> See pp. 224-6, above.

<sup>4</sup> K. to Derby, 29. xi. 75; K.P. Vb, 301.

Egyptian annexation', wrote Kirk, 'was paramount in the minds of the people.' Better the easy overlordship of Zanzibar than that of Cairo: better 'Baluchis' in their forts than Egyptian troops.

But, while Barghash's hold on the coast was stronger in 1875 than it had been at any time since the loss of his fleet, it was not yet strong enough to bear the strain to which the new conception of the Sultanate would subject it. For, if the exercise of real sovereignty was a break with tradition at Zanzibar, it was doubly so on the coast. Seyyid Said himself had never construed his overlordship to imply a right of intervention in the domestic affairs of the Arab seaports. The flying of his flag above their forts meant little more than that they were under his protection as against the outer world. His Governors, except at Mombasa, did little governing except to secure the payment of the customs-duties. Judicial cases might occasionally go on appeal to the Sultan at Zanzibar, but otherwise the townsmen were left to manage their own affairs. Very different were the implications of the new *régime*. In prohibiting the Slave Trade Barghash was not merely laying down the law on the coast as at Zanzibar against the wishes of the leading Arabs. Since the end of the Slave Trade would presently involve the end of Slavery, he was interfering, as Kirk pointed out, with the household life of every Arab and Swahili family; he was dealing drastically and arbitrarily from distant Zanzibar with one of the most domestic of those domestic matters which had never before been treated as within the Sultan's jurisdiction. On the coast, therefore, even more than at Zanzibar, the creation of an efficient military power was a necessity if Barghash was to maintain his new prestige and exercise his new authority.

For a few years, indeed, it seemed as if the existence of 'Mathews' army' was enough in itself to keep the peace, as if there would be no need to use it; but in the early 'eighties there were two occasions on which it had to be used and was used with effect.

On December 3, 1881, Captain Charles Brownrigg of H.M.S. *London*, the senior naval officer at Zanzibar, was cruising off Pemba in a pinnace with a crew of eight seamen and stokers when he sighted a dhow flying the French flag. Slave-smuggling into Pemba had not yet been entirely suppressed, and the use of



French colours as a means of avoiding capture had long been customary. Brownrigg decided to inspect the dhow, but he was well aware that the French authorities, genuinely anxious as they now were to co-operate in the suppression of the Trade, had frequently protested as to the conduct of British naval officers in dealing with dhows under the French flag. To avoid offence, therefore, he ran the pinnace alongside without issuing arms to the crew. The captain and owner of the dhow, as it happened, was a notorious Omani slave-smuggler, Hindi-bin-Khatim; and, seeing the Englishmen defenceless, he poured a volley into the pinnace and boarded her. After a desperate fight Brownrigg and three of his men were cut down. Hindi-bin-Khatim and his men took refuge in the island, and, since the Arabs of Pemba, old and bitter opponents of the suppression of 'slaving', would certainly hinder rather than help the pursuit of them, Barghash might well have found the task of bringing the murderers to justice beyond his powers, had he still possessed no better instrument than the 'Baluchis'; and in that case the work would have had to be done by Brownrigg's second in command and the men of the *London*. As it was, Barghash at once dispatched Mathews and 100 of his troops to Pemba, and reinforced him later with another 250. It took a little time to track the culprits down, partly, it seems, because Barghash had instructed Mathews to be cautious in his dealings with the Pemba sheikhs; but by December 10 Hindi-bin-Khatim and all his crew had been killed in the fighting or died of wounds except two who were in custody. In due course those two were condemned by Barghash to life-imprisonment—the maximum sentence allowed by Moslem law for the murder of an infidel.<sup>1</sup>

A few weeks later the army was needed again. Mbaruk was once more on the warpath. Collecting from the neighbouring tribes, including the formidable Masai, a force of over 2,000

<sup>1</sup> Miles' account of the affair, reports from Holmwood who accompanied the expedition, and depositions from the surviving seamen of the pinnace: Miles to Granville, 8, 14 and 31. xii. 81, with enclosures: K.P. IX. 125-150. Mathews' report to the Sultan, 21. xii. 81, *ibid.*, 150. For Mathews' conduct, see also Lyne, chap. vi. Sentence on prisoners; M. to G., 5 and 21. i. 82; G. to M., 25. i. 82; M. to G., 7. ii. 82; G. to M., 9. ii. 82; *ibid.*, 146-7, 167. After the murder of MacCausland it had been decided that the life-sentence in such cases must be served in a British prison (see p. 246, note 1, above); but on this occasion Barghash was informed that he must execute the sentence himself.

men, he made a sudden raid on the port of Vanga at the beginning of February 1882. Several of the resident Arabs and Swahili were killed, and shops and storehouses were looted. The British Indian traders reckoned their loss at 12,000 dollars. On receipt of the news Barghash dispatched Mathews with 300 of his men to Tanga on which Mbaruk was said to be moving. The moral effect was immediate. Most of Mbaruk's tribesmen melted away, and he himself withdrew with only 300 followers to a stockaded stronghold inland. Thither Mathews pursued him, and, his force now increased by reinforcements of his own troops and irregulars to 1,200, he invested the stronghold for some days and then carried it by assault. About 390 prisoners were taken, including women, children and slaves. The rest of Mbaruk's followers were killed, but he himself succeeded in cutting his way through and escaping inland. 'The result of the expedition', wrote Miles, 'cannot fail to have a great effect on the country in increasing the Sultan's authority and prestige and in overawing the more troublesome tribes near the coast.' Mathews, 'to whose abilities and energy the success was entirely due,' was rewarded by Barghash with a decoration and the gift of an estate.<sup>1</sup>

Mbaruk, however, was still at large, and in the following summer he re-appeared with yet another band of warriors near Rabai. This was a threat not only to Mombasa, but to the safety of the three mission stations in the neighbourhood, one of which was at Rabai itself. There was desultory fighting between Mbaruk's men, mostly Nyika, and the Governor's garrison; and anxious letters were received from Frere Town and Rabai. But on this occasion Barghash took less drastic action. He realised, no doubt, that Mombasa itself, under the shadow of Fort Jesus, was in no real danger, that the missionaries at a pinch could be withdrawn, and that it was not much use attacking Mbaruk's force again and dispersing it unless the irrepressible rebel himself were captured. He did not, therefore, send Mathews and his 'regulars' to Mombasa, but only some 600 irregular reinforcements for the garrison; and, in the course of the subsequent inconclusive fighting, he tried to get rid of Mbaruk as Said had got rid of his Mazrui predecessors, by fraud instead of force. He again offered him a peaceful residence in Pemba or at Takaun-

<sup>1</sup> Miles to Granville, 10. ii., 6. iv. and 3. v. 82: K.P. IX. 178, 196-7.

gu. Pemba was an island and could be made a prison. Takaungu was a Mazrui colony, but not on good terms with Mbaruk; and, as Barghash frankly confided to Miles, 'it would be easy for him to induce those Mazrui to seize Mbaruk suddenly and make him prisoner after he had resided there some time and had been lulled into security.' Not unnaturally Mbaruk rejected both proposals. But in face of the strengthened garrison at Mombasa he decided to withdraw once more into retirement. For some years the coast was at peace again.<sup>1</sup>

## 3

By 1883, then, the authority of the new Sultanate extended more or less effectively from Zanzibar and Pemba to the Arab towns on the coast. So far the Sultan's 'dominions', internationally recognised by a series of treaties since 1822 and endorsed by the Anglo-French Declaration of 1862, were in fact his dominions. But no westward frontier had ever been assigned them, and the situation in the interior had always been quite different, and in 1883 it was still quite different, from the situation along the seaboard. 'On no part of the coast', wrote Frere in 1873, 'can the Sultan's authority be said to be more than skin-deep.'<sup>2</sup> It was true, and in parts the skin was very thin. Barghash had no power whatever over the Somali or the Galla beyond the walls of the northern ports. Inland from Mombasa, likewise, the martial Masai raided as they chose, and at times, as has been seen, came down to the outskirts of Mombasa itself.<sup>3</sup> Few and bold were the Arab traders who had so far ventured to penetrate the Kenya highlands, and no European traversed them till 1883. It was much the same in the extreme south. Though the Bantu tribes in this district were far less formidable than the Somali or the Masai, they were masters of the country within a short distance of the sea. They looted the suburbs of Lindi, though a Governor and garrison were posted there.<sup>4</sup> Nor was any attempt made to bring the tribes of the

<sup>1</sup> Miles to Granville, 22. vii. 82, and, enclosing missionaries' letters, 28. ix. 82: K.P. IX. 231, 253.

<sup>2</sup> F.'s memo., enclosed in F. to G., 7. v. 73: K.P. IIIa, 184.

<sup>3</sup> Charles New records that the Nyika near his station at Ribe were often thrown into panic by the cry, 'The Masai are coming.' *Op. cit.*, 154: cf. 202-3, 218-27, 298.

<sup>4</sup> K.P. IIIa, 185, and see p. 66, above.

central area under control from Zanzibar. Even Usambara, near though it was to the coast, was left entirely to itself. If Barghash had wished to interfere with it an easy opportunity was offered by the disorders which followed on Kimweri's death. But the idea of intervention in Usambara, of 'cleaning it up' and ruling it, never entered Barghash's mind, and presently the old order was restored under Kimweri's son.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the new conception of the Zanzibar Sultanate, like the old, did not imply the government of Africans. But what of the inland Arabs? Did Barghash after 1873 acquire as real an authority over Tabora and the lesser Arab trade stations in the interior as over the Arab coast-towns? To answer that question—a very important question in the light of coming events—the story of the war with Mirambo must be briefly told.

As recorded in Chapter IV, the previous war with Manwa Sera was brought at last to an end by his capture and execution in 1865. But the Arabs of Tabora did not take the opportunity to re-establish the friendly relations with the inland tribes which had been maintained in the early days of the 'colony'. Their leaders at this time are described by Kirk as 'a set of avaricious, unprincipled men'; and, regardless of the ultimate ill-effects on Arab trade, they attempted to wrest such immediate profit as they could by tyrannical exactions not only from native villages but even from the poorer Arab or Swahili traders in the neighbourhood. The trouble came to a head at the end of 1870, soon after Majid's death, and Kirk reported in the following year that emissaries from the Arabs' victims had come to Zanzibar and made complaint to their new overlord. But Barghash, wrote Kirk, 'is impotent to interfere at such a distance as long as things go well for the Arabs.' In these circumstances a successor to Manwa Sera was soon found in Mirambo of Uywewe, a few miles west of Tabora, who took the field in the spring of 1871, proclaimed himself the rightful ruler of Unyamwezi, and blocked the trade-route to Ujiji. It was in the following June, as it happened, that Stanley arrived at Tabora. He found the Arabs preparing, against the advice of the aged Governor, Said-bin-Salim, to attack Mirambo; and by August their army was

<sup>1</sup> Barghash refused to do anything to quell the disorder even on the coast, though Kirk pressed him: K. to Granville, 31. v. 73: K.P. II. 43.

ready. The main body, armed with 'flint-lock muskets, German and French double-barrels, some English Enfields and American Springfields', consisted of forty or fifty Arabs and Swahili and 1,200 of their slaves. Mkisiwa with some 800 Nyamwezi and a few other local chiefs with some 300 followers joined the Arab army. And so, though he was ill with fever at the time, did Stanley with the 50 soldiers of his expedition, anxious, as he says, to repay the Arabs for their hospitality and to help in opening the road to Ujiji. The upshot was another fiasco. The first village held by the enemy was easily stormed and the natives put to flight; but two days later (August 6) a raiding party of some 20 Arabs and 250 slaves was ambushed by Mirambo on its way home and put to rout. Several of the Arabs, some of them members of leading families in Zanzibar, were killed. On hearing the news the main force retreated in panic to Tabora, whither Mirambo presently pursued them. On August 22 he attacked the colony on two sides, repulsed a counter-attack in which five more Arabs and many slaves were killed, set part of the 'colony' on fire, and virtually besieged the rest of it for the next four days. Stanley hoisted the Stars and Stripes over his house and determined to resist to the end; but the Arabs, for whose cowardice and indecision his journal now expresses measureless contempt, were so disheartened that there was talk, if Tabora were taken, of 'starting *en masse* for the coast and giving up the country to Mirambo'. On the night of the 26th, however, Mirambo withdrew; and on September 20, when Stanley at last took the road for Ujiji, he had not been seen again in the vicinity of Tabora. But the westward caravan-route was still in his control, and in the following April Barghash received appeals for help. 'We and Mirambo are at war', wrote Said-bin-Salim: 'my master, do not neglect to send troops and stores.' 'All the people of the land', wrote another notable, 'are united against your slaves, the Arabs. . . . If anyone pass a little outside [the colony], he is seized and killed. . . . Of your kindness please help us and send troops speedily to your slaves.' But Barghash refused to believe that Tabora was in real danger. 'He evidently suspects', reported Kirk, 'that the Arabs are desirous of inducing him to send stores and troops that they may turn to their own profit.' So this second war dragged on like the first. 'The position of the Arabs and Mirambo seems unaltered,'

wrote Kirk in November 1872, 'and the Unyanyembe ivory trade is still closed.'<sup>1</sup>

In the course of 1873 Barghash at last decided to intervene. He may have been influenced by a chance remark by Dr. Badger at one of their discussions of Frere's Treaty; for, when Badger pointed out, with reference to Livingstone's complaints about the prevalence of the Slave Trade in Unyamwezi, that events in that region did not concern the Sultan, Barghash promptly took him up. 'Unyamwezi', he said, 'is part of my territory. My flag is hoisted there.'<sup>2</sup> Frere seized on this declaration as a point in favour of the Treaty. He told Badger to inform Barghash that, if he would agree to suppress the Slave Trade and so protect the people of Unyamwezi from enslavement, the British Government would gladly recognise his authority in that area. 'We shall not look on unconcerned if people come from afar to trouble him.' Otherwise it would be a matter of indifference who was the master of Unyamwezi. 'I do not see why we should object to Egypt trying her hand there too'—the Egyptian Government, as will be seen in the next chapter, was now fast pushing southwards up the Nile—'she may do better, she can hardly do worse.'<sup>3</sup> Whether these hints went home there is no evidence to show; but when Cameron came to Tabora in the following summer he found no less than 1,000 'Baluchis' quartered there under two of Barghash's officers. His Governor, however, Said-bin-Salim, was apparently a weakling; and another Arab, Mohammed-bin-Salim, 'although holding no authority from Seyyid Barghash, was looked upon by the traders here as their practical head to whom they always referred in any matter of dispute.' Nor did Cameron think that, though a further reinforcement of 2,000 men from the coast towns arrived while he was at Tabora, the Arabs would make head against Mirambo. Their ingrained factiousness, he thought, would prevent their ever agreeing on a single plan of campaign.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Stanley, *How I found Livingstone*, 267-304. K. to Granville, 22. ix. 71: F.O. 84. 1344. K. to G., 10. iv. 72 (with translations of Arab letters to Barghash), and 5. xi. 72: K.P. Ig, 25 and 67.

<sup>2</sup> Badger's report, 14. i. 73, enclosure no. 1 in F. to G., 26. iii. 73: Frere B.B. 100.

<sup>3</sup> Note from F. to Badger; Badger's report, 14. i. 73, enclosure no. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Cameron, i. 77, 124, 151-2, 207-8, 240.

## THE NEW SULTANATE

It soon seemed as if Cameron was right. Months went by, and Mirambo remained comfortably installed about half-way between Tabora and Ujiji, occupying the surrounding villages, straddling the ivory-route to Manyema. But Barghash persisted for a time. In the summer of 1874, in order to meet the cost of maintaining and supplying his 'Baluchis' at such a distance from Zanzibar, he raised the duty on ivory exported from the so-called 'monopoly ports' of the Mrima from 9 to 12½ dollars per *frasilah*, and also increased the duty on cloves imported into Zanzibar from Pemba—measures which were expected to bring in an additional 100,000 dollars of revenue.<sup>1</sup> Before the year was out, however, Barghash changed his mind once more. He wrote to Tabora disclaiming any further interference in the affairs of Unyamwezi. Little use though they had made of the Sultan's help, the Tabora Arabs were dismayed at the prospect of losing it, and they hastily dispatched a letter of protest to Hashil-bin-Salim, a leading sheikh at Zanzibar. 'We have received a letter from our master, Seyyid Barghash-bin-Said, saying that Unyamwezi belongs to us and that we belong to it and that he has nothing to do with the country. Be it known to you, O our sheikh, that Unyamwezi and its inhabitants are our master's, Seyyid Barghash-bin-Said's, property, not the property of others; and we who are settled in it are his subjects, and we can only live there with his authority and name. . . . Please tell our master not to leave us as we have no other power to stand before the enemy but through him. . . .'<sup>2</sup> But Barghash was now as obdurate as he had been in 1871. He commanded Amir-bin-Sultan, who had succeeded Said-bin-Salim as Governor at Tabora, 'to return to Zanzibar with all soldiers under his orders, and abstain from interfering with disturbances in the interior'.<sup>3</sup> He was determined, he told Elton, 'to leave the Arab colonists to fight their own battles'.<sup>3</sup> A new Governor, it is true, was presently appointed, but his authority was as nominal as that of his predecessors. The Sultan's flag might still fly at Tabora, but it meant far less there than at Kilwa or Mombasa or Lamu.

<sup>1</sup> Prideaux to Derby, 31. vii. 74: K.P. IV. 97. The average price of ivory at Zanzibar apart from the new duty was 65 dollars per *frasilah* (=35 lbs.). For the 'monopoly', see *East Africa and its Invaders*, 303, 487.

<sup>2</sup> Translation of Arabic letter from Tabora, included in Elton to Derby, 22. xii. 74: K.P. Va, 34.

<sup>3</sup> E. to D., 24. xii. 74: K.P. Va, 35.

This failure of Barghash's attempt to make his power felt in Unyamwezi was a more serious matter than at the time he knew; and its immediate and obvious result was bad enough. The security of the main channel of trade and revenue between Zanzibar and Lakes Tanganyika and Victoria was left to the factious and irresponsible Arabs of Tabora who for years past had shown themselves incapable, even when heavily reinforced from the coast, either to suppress Mirambo or to come to terms with him. As it happened, Barghash's withdrawal from Tabora was followed by a period of quiescence; but it was a truce rather than a peace, and to Kirk the situation seemed so dangerously unstable that he decided to intervene himself. He despaired of the Tabora Arabs, but what of Mirambo? Missionaries were now beginning to penetrate the area he controlled and they reported well of him. Kirk himself sent him from time to time a 'friendly message'; and his replies seemed to show that he understood 'the power and influence of the British Government' and was 'ready to meet my [Kirk's] wishes'. By the spring of 1878 Kirk felt justified in formally reporting this *liaison* to the Foreign Office. Messengers from Mirambo, he wrote, had arrived at Zanzibar 'for the purpose of assuring Her Majesty's Government through me of his desire to open friendly relations and assist in all measures that may lead to increased intercourse and trade in the countries over which he has made himself the paramount chief'. He desired a British missionary to come and 'teach his people', and wanted through the British consulate to come to an understanding with the Sultan with a view to improving 'the means of communication with the vast country over which he is the supreme chief' and abolishing the heavy taxes levied by petty chiefs along the trade-routes—objects, Kirk observed, which 'so thoroughly meet my own views that I intend assisting him in this through the Sultan'. 'At the present time', Kirk continues, 'the Arab power in Unyanyembe [Tabora] is so divided and weak that the only hope I see of order being maintained is through some powerful native chief, and in Mirambo we have one both powerful and intelligent, who has, moreover, shown a most marked wish to be guided by good advice and sees his own interest bound up in the support he thus obtains.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> K. to Derby, 3. v. 78: K.P. VIb, 383.



A few months later a party sent out by the L.M.S. under the Rev. J. B. Thomson passed through Mirambo's headquarters on their way to Ujiji. Mirambo once more made a good impression, and asked Thomson to write to Kirk saying: 'I lay my country open to all white men. I have nothing more to say than that when I see a white man I regard him as my friend.' The Arabs at Tabora, he went on, were making trouble. Their Governor would 'cause bloodshed if he were not removed'. Let the Sultan send a better man. . . .<sup>1</sup> So far, so good. It seemed as if Kirk's diplomatic intervention was proving successful. A little later, a C.M.S. Missionary, Dr. E. J. Southon, took up his quarters at Mirambo's capital. He would reinforce, it might be hoped, Kirk's 'good advice'.

Kirk's desire to obtain some measure of peace and stability in Unyamwezi was not only prompted by the old need of keeping the trade routes open and safe. New factors were beginning to operate in the interior which were already changing and were soon to transform the whole situation. In the first place the work of the great explorers in 'opening up' East Africa was having its inevitable result. European interest in the future of that vast virgin field had been quickened. At the moment commercial activity was still confined to the coast; but the possibilities of economic development in the interior had been described in sanguine terms by the explorers; and sooner or later ideas of economic development were likely to be linked with ideas of political expansion. At any time, moreover, and with or without economic or political designs behind it, the question might be asked to whom the interior 'belonged' or who was responsible for the conduct of its inhabitants; for European missionaries and scientists were already hurrying along the explorers' tracks up towards the Lakes. There were no less than thirty-six of

<sup>1</sup> Thomson to K., 3. viii. 78: K.P. VIb, 436-7. Thomson describes Mirambo as follows: 'He is a man of about 40 years old, 6 ft. 10 or 11 in., not stout but well made and firm, very active, and has none of the put-on dignity which native chiefs so often put on. He is very quick, shrewd, and never at rest. His features are small, but he is quiet and kindly in manner. He has twenty-five wives and five children living. He does not drink: beer and brandy he will not look at. He punishes his people if they drink too much.' Cameron had written in 1873: 'I cannot but admire the pluck and determination shown by Mirambo.' *Op. cit.*, i. 152. For Stanley's favourable impression, see *Through the Dark Continent* (London, 1878), i. 492-3.

them, Kirk reported in 1880, at various points in the midland region.<sup>1</sup> And more would certainly be coming. That they would have difficulties of one kind or another with the natives was inevitable. A serious 'incident' might occur at any time—so serious, perhaps, as to provoke the intervention of a European government. Murders on the coast could be dealt with by the Sultan, as has been seen; but what of murders up country? Said, it is true, had exacted retribution for the murder of a Frenchman in 1845, but that was only some eighty miles from the coast.<sup>2</sup> Roscher's murderers, again, had been sent to Zanzibar from as far inland as Lake Nyasa;<sup>3</sup> but no other such case is on record.

This first new factor in the situation—the increasing intrusion of Europeans—was aggravated by a second. The Africans were now getting armed with European weapons. On the East African coast as in other backward quarters of the world the arms traffic was as profitable as it was reprehensible; and from the time of their first entry into those waters European and American merchants had sold guns and powder as well as less questionable goods.<sup>4</sup> Traffic in arms is a business which every civilised government is bound to control, and in two of the commercial treaties which Seyyid Said had concluded with foreign states this traffic had been specifically excepted from the concession of the right to trade freely in his dominions.<sup>5</sup> Soon after his accession, moreover, Barghash had assumed a monopoly of the sale of powder.<sup>6</sup> But illicit gun-running along the coast was even easier than slave-smuggling, since guns are easier to hide than men and women; and even if it were checked by the Sultan's Governor's within his dominions, it could not be checked at all south of Cape Delgado. Thus Kirk reported towards the end of 1880 that the arms traffic was being 'pushed' from Ibo, and that during the last few years no less than thirty or forty thousand stands of guns and rifles had been sent up country by one route or another every year. 'One thing is clear,' he commented gravely: 'if the natives go on for a few more years arming as at present, it will be quite impossible for any but a

<sup>1</sup> K. to G., 24. viii. 80; K.P. VII. 488.

<sup>2</sup> See *East Africa and its Invaders*, 353-6.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 110, above.

<sup>4</sup> See *East Africa and its Invaders*, 199, 345, 383, 490.

<sup>5</sup> American Treaty, Art. II. *Ibid.*, 368; French Treaty, Art. XIV.

<sup>6</sup> For French attempt to evade these restrictions, see pp. 339-41, below.

thoroughly equipped and organised party to traverse the interior.'<sup>1</sup>

When Kirk wrote those words, two tragedies had already occurred. On December 18, 1878, Mr. Penrose of the C.M.S., on his way to Tabora with a caravan, was attacked by a body of Nyamwezi, inflamed by the recent death of two of their fellow tribesmen at the hands of some members of a French missionary expedition. They were armed with guns, and surrounding Penrose and fifty of his men they shot them down.<sup>2</sup> The second tragedy was in the summer of 1880. As Mirambo had expected or intended, war had broken out again that year with the Arabs of Tabora, and in June a Belgian scientific expedition, headed by a British officer, Captain Carter, was passing through the outskirts of Mirambo's country between Tabora and Ujiji. On the 24th they happened to be at the village of Mpimbwe when it was attacked by a band of Mirambo's warriors, armed again with guns, and intent, it afterwards appeared, on loot and slaves. The assault was successful, and most of the victors pursued the flying villagers into the 'bush'; but one body of them turned on the white men's camp, though they had taken no part in the fighting and flew the white flag of peace. Carter and his companion Cadenhead and all of their 120 servants and porters who had not fled or been taken prisoners were killed.<sup>3</sup>

Mirambo was actually in command of his troops at the time, and the leader of another Belgian party then at Tabora, Captain Popelin, had no doubt that the attack on the white men had been made at Mirambo's bidding. He wrote at once to Barghash begging him 'in the name of humanity' to punish the crime. 'Your great influence over all the peoples this side of the Lake is unquestioned. You have only to inform the Governor of Tabora of your wishes and prompt justice will be done.'<sup>4</sup> Mirambo for his part denied all personal responsibility for the tragedy, and Dr. Southon, the missionary now stationed with him, believed him.<sup>5</sup> So popular, indeed, had Mirambo now become in mis-

<sup>1</sup> K. to Granville, 21. ix. and 11. xii. 80: K.P. VII. 518; K.P. VIII. 171.

<sup>2</sup> K. to Salisbury, 5. i. and 28. ii. 79: K.P. Vc, 42, 65.

<sup>3</sup> K. to G., 20. viii. and 21. ix. 80: K.P. VII. 484, 516.

<sup>4</sup> Popelin to Sultan, 11. viii. 80, enclosed in K. to Granville, 18. x. 80: K.P. VII. 526.

<sup>5</sup> K. to G., 21. ix. and 18. x. 80: K.P. VII. 517, 525.

sionary circles that, when they heard that a punitive expedition from Zanzibar was contemplated, the C.M.S. and L.M.S. submitted a joint memorial to Granville, protesting their belief that Mirambo was innocent and deprecating action against him.<sup>1</sup> But Kirk from the first had no doubt of his guilt.<sup>2</sup> Nor was that all. So far from his trying to make peace with the Arabs and keep order in the wide area he already controlled, it was clear from various reports that the operations, in the course of which the murders had incidentally occurred, aimed at an enlargement of Mirambo's power north-westwards so as to cut off Tabora from access to Uganda.<sup>3</sup> Evidently Kirk's *protégé* was proving unreliable; but Southon still upheld him. The 'incident' has given him 'a severe lesson', he wrote; and 'your influence over him is greater than ever'. 'It has gratified me immensely to know', he added, 'that your support will not be given to the Arabs to attack Mirambo: for, as we are well aware, they could not but succeed if you were on their side, whilst, with you neutral, they could never conquer Mirambo.'<sup>4</sup>

Certainly Kirk had not recommended the Sultan to launch a punitive expedition so far into the interior. He knew, better than Captain Popelin, what Barghash could and could not do. 'The settlement of disputes with Mirambo', he wrote to Granville, 'or tribes farther inland is at present impossible and beyond the Sultan's power. The Arab traders will have to defend their own interests and conduct such native wars in native ways, and this they could easily do were it not for the want of cohesion amongst themselves.'<sup>5</sup> The policy Kirk advised and Barghash adopted on the morrow of the Belgian tragedy was more modest and more effective. In the first place the prohibition of the sale of powder on the coast was more rigorously enforced. Secondly, Mathews was ordered to march inland from Bagamoyo with 200 of his troops and establish a fortified post about 120 miles up the route to Tabora—a step, said Kirk, 'which ought to have been taken years ago'.<sup>6</sup> The point selected was 'a commanding and healthy situation' at Mamboia. 'Lieutenant Mathews'

<sup>1</sup> Enclosure No. 2 in F.O. to K., 8. ii. 81: K.P. VIII. 202.

<sup>2</sup> K. to G., 21. ix. 80: K.P. VII. 517.

<sup>3</sup> K. to G., 12. i. 81: K.P. VIII. 208.

<sup>4</sup> S. to K., 1. i. 81: K.P. VIII. 230.

<sup>5</sup> K. to G., 18. x. 80: K.P. VII. 526.

<sup>6</sup> K. to G., 21. ix. and 18. x. 80: K.P. VII. 518, 525.

object', Kirk reported, 'is to form a base among friendly natives, and establish government where now there is none, to secure the roads to travellers, and eventually to make use of this for advancing further inland and so create a line of military posts through Ugogo.' By this means he will 'for the first time assert a distinct claim to the sovereignty over Central Africa'.<sup>1</sup>

'Establish government', 'a line of posts'—this was a highly significant novelty. It meant the effective extension of the Zanzibar Sultanate right up towards the heart of the midland region. It meant the definite inclusion of a gradually widening inland area in the Sultan's dominions. It meant in modern political terms that he was intending to occupy, annex and administer a section of the interior—a task which the Arabs had never before attempted in East Africa.

Kirk evidently hoped that this process might be steadily continued until in course of time it reached Tabora and even perhaps beyond it to Ujiji. The Sultan, he had said, was powerless *at present* to control the area occupied by Mirambo. Some day, it was to be inferred, he might control it. Meantime, in order that peace should be established and trade flow freely all the way to the Great Lakes, Kirk recommended that Mirambo's sovereignty over the country beyond Tabora should be recognised. 'My ultimate hope is that, should the Sultan of Zanzibar succeed in opening the road through Ugogo, Mirambo may then, seeing His Highness' power not far off and feeling by that time the effect of the stoppage of gunpowder, be ready to join in a common action for securing the safety of the roads from the coast to the interior.' To further that end he suggested that he might be instructed to inform the Sultan 'that in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government those parts of Africa [i.e. beyond Tabora] are outside His Highness' dominions, and that Mirambo is acknowledged by us as independent.'<sup>2</sup>

This was a bold, clear policy, 'likely to lead', as Kirk put it, 'to the best practical results with the least likelihood of complication.' But to be effective it had to be adopted as a whole, and the Foreign Office only accepted half of it. Kirk's efforts at pacifying the interior were approved. He was to continue them at his own discretion. 'It will, however, be well that you should

<sup>1</sup> K. to G., 24. viii. and 18. x. 80: K.P. VII. 487, 525.

<sup>2</sup> K. to G., 8. iii. 81: K.P. VIII. 230.

avoid committing Her Majesty's Government to any policy entailing a definition of the extent of the Sultan's territory inland.<sup>1</sup> It was natural, no doubt, that Granville and his advisers should shrink from any new commitment in a field of which they knew so little. But their inaction meant that, with the important exception of the new military post at Mamboia, the political situation in the interior remained as vague as it had been before. The scarlet flag still flew at Tabora and Ujiji and other smaller Arab settlements and at the head of Arab caravans on all the trade routes, but did that mean, as Barghash claimed, that all that inland area was within the frontiers of the Zanzibar Sultanate? The course of events was very soon to force an answer to that question.

### 4

If the international status of the Sultanate in the early 'eighties was still uncertain in the interior, there was no doubt about it on the coast. Zanzibar had now acquired by time and usage its recognised place as an independent State in the society of States. It had concluded treaties with several other States on a footing of equality; and, if it had accepted one particular treaty under duress, it had yielded, as sovereign States have often yielded, to *force majeure* without losing its independence. It was nobody's 'protectorate' or 'dependency'. But if, as compared with other oriental princes, the Sultan of Zanzibar was much more of a sovereign than, say, the Nizam of Hyderabad, he was a little less of a sovereign than, say, the Shah of Persia. Not only would his possession and exercise of sovereignty have been precarious without the support of a foreign government—there were precedents for that in more than one quarter of the world—but from the moment he signed the Treaty of 1873 he established so close a relationship with an official agent of that foreign government, took him so fully into his confidence, became increasingly so dependent on his advice as to endow that agent, as time went on, with a personal authority in his dominions scarcely less respected than his own. The British consul-general became also a sort of unofficial prime minister of Zanzibar.

The foundation of Kirk's peculiar position had been laid

<sup>1</sup> F.O. to K., 18. iv. 81: K.P. VIII. 233.

before 1873—partly by the prestige acquired by his predecessors at the consulate, especially Hamerton and Rigby, partly, as has been observed, by his own diplomatic treatment of Barghash in the first two years of his reign. Schultz, the German consul, told Frere in 1873 that the British consul, 'as representing the largest commercial interests,' had always taken the lead among the European representatives and was in fact 'the real Governor of Zanzibar'.<sup>1</sup> And a year later Cameron reported from as far inland as the Lualaba or upper Congo, that the Arab traders there had 'a great respect for our consul, looking upon him as superior to anyone but their own Sultan with whom they deem him almost on an equality'. Cameron believed, indeed, that the Arabs broke off the fighting and bloodshed they were then engaged in for fear he would report it to Kirk.<sup>2</sup> When he got to the Atlantic at Loanda in 1875 Cameron repeated in a dispatch to the Foreign Office that all the Arabs wandering in the interior of the continent regarded the British consul at Zanzibar as 'a sort of second Sultan'.<sup>3</sup> Similar evidence came a few years later from Hore, the L.M.S. missionary at Ujiji. 'I am a person of importance and influence here very much because I am "the brother of the great *balazi* (consul)" or "his countryman" or "his friend". I believe you yourself scarcely know the extent of your influence in the interior, but I can assure you I have seen very remarkable results from the mere mention of your name.'<sup>4</sup>

Barghash seems never to have betrayed the slightest jealousy of this separate or parallel authority enjoyed by Kirk in his dominions. He knew that it was used to strengthen his own. He knew that Kirk was as anxious as he was himself to maintain the integrity of his realm; and from 1873 to 1885 he gave him all his confidence on any subject of importance. Thus, whereas previously Kirk had depended on his secret agents or on guesswork for an understanding of what the French consul was doing at the palace, in later years Barghash seems to have kept him informed of everything that passed between him and the agents of the

<sup>1</sup> F. to G., 25. iii. 73: K.P. IIIa, 150.

<sup>2</sup> Cameron, i. 369.

<sup>3</sup> C. to Derby, 29. xi. 75: K.P. Vb, 77.

<sup>4</sup> H. to K., 26. xii. 79, enclosed in K. to Salisbury, 27. ii. 80: K.P. VII. 417. In his covering letter Kirk alludes to frauds perpetrated on native chiefs by Europeans 'professing to act in my name'. For further evidence of Kirk's prestige in the interior in 1885, see Sir F. Jackson, *Early Days in East Africa* (London, 1930), 61.

outer world. If, for instance, he received a communication from a foreign government, Kirk's copy of it would soon be on its way to Whitehall. It was the same with any unofficial visitor to Zanzibar whose business there was a matter of speculation. When H. M. Stanley, for example, had an audience with Barghash, Kirk was told at once what he had said. And Kirk could repay Barghash in kind. His consular *clientèle* was a sort of information service. On the one hand he was in constant touch with the British Indian traders up and down the coast; and, while he defended their rights if need arose, he also listened to their news. On the other hand, British missionaries were now invading the interior in increasing numbers; and though Kirk had to deal firmly on occasion with one or two of them, they were all his friends. They had all passed through his house on their way to their posts and were welcomed back to it whenever they came on leave. They all regarded him as the only man in East Africa to whom they could turn for advice and, if trouble came, for help. Most of them wrote to him regularly, telling him in detail how they were faring, what was happening in their districts, what the people and their chiefs were like. So from one source or another Kirk came to know more about East Africa than anyone else, more than the Sultan himself; and it is natural enough to find Barghash asking and getting from him the latest news of the interior.<sup>1</sup>

In fact the control of mid-East Africa in those twelve years was shared between two men; and the smoothness and success of the partnership demanded much of both. Barghash, it will be remembered, had begun by hating Europeans and particularly Englishmen. He had shown courage, pride, wilfulness and a fiery temper. But now, though Kirk sometimes found him angry, it seems never to have been anger with him. It is difficult, indeed, to recognise in the Sultan talking amiably and confidentially to Kirk, say in 1879, the rebel who in 1859 had handed his sword to Rigby sobbing with rage and shame.<sup>2</sup> Kirk himself in 1870 and again in 1873 had thought it might be necessary to remove from the throne so obstinate and bigoted an opponent of British humanitarianism as Barghash then seemed to be. Were not all Arabs, as Coghlan had said,<sup>3</sup> politically childish, re-

<sup>1</sup> For Kirk's 'secret service', see Jackson, 62.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 24, above.

<sup>3</sup> *Disputes Commission Report*, 85.



fusing to face the facts, determined to get their impossible way, incapable of compromise? But Barghash was an unusual Arab; and he proved it by his surrender to reality in 1873.

Yet he might never have made that surrender and, if he had, the sequel might well have been other than it was if Kirk on his side had not been an unusual man. His delicate task required quite exceptional gifts of character and understanding, and none of his predecessors, it is safe to say, could have performed it as successfully as he did—not fever-ridden, irritable Churchill, nor impetuous, high-handed Rigby, nor even Hamerton who never quite shook off the atmosphere of British India. Already as a young man on the Zambesi Expedition, Kirk had shown that he had courage and common-sense and a capacity for handling men, even for handling Livingstone. In his early years at Zanzibar he had quickly found his feet, made himself an indispensable lieutenant to his chief, impressed so favourably the British officers and explorers who saw him at work that the Committee of 1870 regarded him as the indispensable instrument of British policy. In 1873 he had furnished Frere with most of his information and most of his arguments. And after 1873, his self-confidence fortified by the events which followed Frere's departure, he developed all the qualities of a first-rate diplomatist. In particular he was careful in all he said or did never to question Barghash's sovereignty. Barghash was well aware of his dependence on British friendship, but not because Kirk told him of it. The formalities and courtesies were always observed. Kirk never took advantage of his confidential relations with the Sultan. He never behaved as an equal, still less as a superior. He never blustered or bullied. He was always the respectful representative of a foreign government at the court of an independent prince. More important than anything else, he was scrupulously loyal. The temptations of a 'second Sultan' for a man of less fine a sense of honour might easily have been irresistible. At the best in the interests of his country, at the worst from personal ambition or love of power, he might have indulged in intrigue among the Arab notables, attempted to organise a sort of party of his own, undermined the Sultan's prestige in order to put him more completely at his mercy. But in all the multitudinous documents there is no trace, no hint, of anything of the kind. Kirk seems as a rule to have deliberately avoided personal dealings

with the Arabs of Zanzibar and Pemba and the coast. And if he made contact with African chiefs in the interior and, as in Mirambo's case, accepted such advances as they chose to make to the 'second Sultan', it was not only to the Sultan's manifest advantage, but with his knowledge and approval. All in all, it was as honest and as happy a partnership as it was successful; and, if there are other good personal chapters in the history of British contact with the tropical world—Raffles at Singapore, Maclean on the Gold Coast, Gordon at Khartum, Lugard in Nigeria—there is no better chapter than that which records the twelve years' government of mid-East Africa by Barghash and Kirk.

# XIII

## THE EGYPTIAN INVASION

(1875-1876)

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With the *régime* described in the preceding chapter Kirk was perforce content. It met the requirements of British policy to a reasonable extent. It closely restricted, if it could not completely abolish, the Slave Trade. It protected the interests of the British Indian community. It kept the door open for such British commercial enterprise as might in time develop. It maintained the political *status quo*. But Kirk could never be sure of its stability. Internally Barghash's realm was now secure enough. Externally it was as insecure as it had always been. No doubt the Sultan's sovereignty was fully acknowledged in international relations. No doubt the independence of his dominions had been recognised by two great powers. But such rights were treacherous ground for a weak and poor prince to stand on in a restless and greedy world without sufficient force of his own to back them; and by an ironical coincidence the establishment of the new Sultanate in effective authority on the coast and islands of mid-East Africa with a fair prospect of its gradual extension inland coincided with the beginning of a series of assaults on it from outside. With those assaults and their outcome the rest of this book will be concerned.

### I

The first assault, a sudden and violent one, came from a quite unexpected quarter—from Africa, not from Europe.

It will be remembered that, when Speke and Grant made their way from Uganda down the upper Nile in 1863, they came into contact with an outpost of the Egyptian Government at

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Faloro.<sup>1</sup> As early as 1819 Mahomet Ali had invaded, reduced and annexed the northern part of the Sudan, and its retention under the government of Cairo had been the only lasting result of his dreams of a great Egyptian Empire. For fifty years he and his successors were content with a loose occupation of the country as far south as Gondokoro and with the great profits of the trade in slaves and ivory coming down the Nile from Khartum. Throughout this period all and more than all the sufferings of East Africans from the Arab Slave Trade were endured by the Nilotic tribes of the Sudan. First for enrolment in the Egyptian army and then, when it appeared they could not stand a soldier's life in a more northerly climate, for the slave market of Cairo, thousands of Sudanese were drained away downstream year by year. Organised slave raids became a regular business. Captains of the industry like the notorious Zebehr Pasha scoured the south-west Sudan from Khartum to the outskirts of Lake Chad. The local Egyptian officials were hand in glove with the raiders while at Cairo the magnates of the Trade were as powerful as they were wealthy. All this was known to the British Government, and at an early stage they had striven to bring Egypt within the scope of their world-wide crusade against the Slave Trade; but the vehement and repeated protests of British ministers elicited vehement and repeated promises and virtually nothing else till in 1863 Ismail became Khedive.<sup>2</sup> Ismail's memory is mainly associated with the financial recklessness which proved his ruin; but he and his chief adviser, Nubar Pasha, were men of culture and imagination, by no means unaffected by the current of liberal thought in Europe; and, if their Sudanese policy was in some respects a revival of Mahomet Ali's 'imperialism', there is no reason to assume that the humanitarian side of it was insincere. The principal motive, no doubt, was a desire to exploit the physical resources of equatorial Africa and in particular to get a better control of the ivory trade. Doubtless, also, Ismail realised that the chief obstacle to the

<sup>1</sup> See p. 108, above.

<sup>2</sup> Pressure on Mahomet Ali and his successors: *S.P.* xxvi (1837-8), 632-6; xxvii (1838-9), 717-25; xxxi (1842-3), 594-7; xxxii (1843-4), 548-59; xxxiii (1844-5), 609-13; xxxvii (1848-9), 431-4; xxxviii (1849-50, pt. i), 476-7. And see H. Dodwell, *The Founder of Modern Egypt* (Cambridge, 1931), 50-2, 64-5, 231-2. About 1860, some three to four thousand slaves a year were coming down the Nile to Cairo: *S.P.* li (1860-1), 1069-78.

execution of this design was the stranglehold of the Slave Trade fraternity on the Sudan. But that he really meant to suppress the Trade was evident when in 1869 he invited Samuel Baker, whose discovery of a second source of the Nile in Lake Albert had won him a knighthood in 1866, to enter his service as 'Governor-General of the Equatorial Nile Basin'. The appointment was for four years with a salary of £10,000 and it invested Baker with 'absolute and supreme' power to 'subdue to our authority the countries situated to the south of Gondokoro, to suppress the Slave Trade, to introduce a system of regular commerce, to open to navigation the great Lakes of the Equator, and to establish a chain of military stations and commercial depots . . . throughout Central Africa'.<sup>1</sup> Baker loyally served his time, but all he was able to achieve was the closing of the upper Nile as the chief northward channel of the Trade.

Since the slave gangs could be diverted across the desert, the Trade was still active when Frere interviewed Ismail at Cairo at the end of 1872 and encouraged him to persevere.<sup>2</sup> A few months earlier Nubar Pasha had happened to meet at Constantinople Colonel Charles George Gordon, C.B., now 39 years old and famous as 'Chinese Gordon', and the result of the encounter was Gordon's appointment in the autumn of 1873 as Baker's successor with a general's rank and a salary reduced at its recipient's characteristic request to £2,000. In April 1874 Gordon was at Gondokoro eager to begin his task, which the Khedive had defined in much the same terms as Baker's.<sup>3</sup> He had been convinced at Cairo of Ismail's sincerity and had adopted with enthusiasm his ideas of a great expansion of Egyptian power southwards into the heart of Africa. For, though their temperaments were very different, Gordon had much in common with the other great Scotsman who had recently given his life to Africa. Like Livingstone he had a burning hatred of the Slave Trade. 'You can scarcely conceive the misery and suffering,'<sup>4</sup> he wrote after witnessing the devastation wrought by 'slavers' in

<sup>1</sup> *Firman*: T. D. Murray and A. S. White, *Sir Samuel Baker, a memoir* (London, 1895), 148-9.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 185, above.

<sup>3</sup> Ismail's instructions, 16. ii. 74: P. Crabitès, *Gordon, the Sudan and Slavery* (London, 1933), 28-30.

<sup>4</sup> G. B. Hill, ed., *Gordon in Central Africa, 1874-9*, a collection of letters and documents (London, 1899), 346-7, 366.

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Kordofan and Darfur. 'No one who has a mother or sisters or children could be callous to the intense human suffering which these poor wretches undergo. . . . I declare, if I could stop this traffic, I would willingly be shot this night.' And, like Livingstone, he believed it could be most easily and quickly stopped by the spread of civilisation and lawful trade. 'Open out the country', he said, 'and it will fall of itself.'<sup>1</sup> Like Livingstone, too, he had no shadow of doubt that in working to that end he was God's instrument.<sup>2</sup>

Shortly before Gordon reached Gondokoro a party had arrived there bearing messages and presents for the Khedive from Mtesa; so one of Gordon's first acts was to dispatch his American lieutenant, Colonel Chaillé-Long, to Uganda to return the compliment. For the next eight months Gordon was fully occupied with the first slow stages of his advance towards the Great Lakes. New posts were established at regular intervals from Lado southwards to Dufilé; the stretches of the Nile between them were patrolled by small steamboats; and efforts were made to win the friendship of the tribal chiefs along the banks. It was slow and difficult work, and in particular it was hampered and delayed by the fact that men and equipment and supplies had not only to come all the way from Cairo but might be stopped and diverted by the jealous Egyptian Governor of Khartum. Gordon was soon convinced that the expeditions he was planning for the penetration and occupation of the south could scarcely succeed if he continued to operate with a base 2,500 miles away; and the idea occurred to him, as it had occurred to Speke and other East African explorers, that the quickest and easiest way to 'open up' the area of the Great Lakes was not by the Nile but overland from the East African coast. 'Think, think, think,' he wrote to C. M. Watson, a member of his staff, on December 28, 1874, 'is what I am always doing, how to remedy the delay in communicating with the civilised world in a quicker way than at present. . . . I want to pierce to Formosa Bay, distant from Mtesa about 400 miles. A series of small powerful military posts along a constructed road would do the job and free us from Khartum and these steamers.'<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Crabitès, 23.

<sup>2</sup> The best account of Gordon's life and work in the Sudan is B. M. Allen's *Gordon and the Sudan* (London, 1931).

<sup>3</sup> S. Lane-Poole, *Watson Pasha* (London, 1919), 61.

The thinking materialised. On January 21, 1875, Gordon wrote to the sister who shared all that was in his mind: 'I have proposed to the Khedive to send 150 men in a steamer to Formosa Bay, 250 miles north of Zanzibar, and there to establish a station and thence to push towards Mtesa. If I can do that, I shall make my base at Formosa and give up Khartum. . . . The centre of Africa would be much more effectually opened out as the only valuable parts of the country are the high lands near Mtesa, while all south of this and Khartum is wretched marsh. I hope the Khedive will do it.'<sup>1</sup> For the command of the expedition Gordon suggested Captain H. F. McKillop, R.N., who had been engaged since 1869, with the Admiralty's permission, on a commission from the Khedive to organise schools for preparing boys for service in the Egyptian navy. In due course McKillop received an 'earnest request' from Gordon to accept the command if offered him.<sup>2</sup>

The idea, of course, was right. One day a railway from Mombasa to Lake Victoria was to provide, till the coming of aircraft, the quickest route from Europe to Uganda. But Gordon seems to have supposed that the occupation of Mombasa was no less legitimate than that of any of his posts on the upper Nile. He knew that the Sultan of Zanzibar claimed dominion somewhere on that coast, but that was all; and since no southern frontier had been fixed to his Equatorial Province, he was ready to include in it as much of Central Africa as served his great design.

Months passed, and Gordon heard no more of his bold proposal. He did not forget it, for in July he wrote to Burton the explorer, now consul at Trieste, to ask about the Zanzibar territory and especially its northward limits. If the coast north of the equator did not belong to the Sultan, whose was it? And the inland tribes—had they got firearms? 'My idea is that till the core of Africa is pierced from the coast but little progress will take place among the hordes of natives in the interior.' And it would be of immediate use to him as a means of circumventing Khartum. 'By the sea route I should be free.' Then comes a rather disagreeable reference to Kirk. 'The idea is entirely my own, and I would ask you not to mention it, as (though you are

<sup>1</sup> Allen, *op. cit.*, 37. 'Mombasa' in this text must be a misreading of 'Formosa'.

<sup>2</sup> Admiralty to F.O., 4. i. 76: Gordon to Derby, 20. iii. 76: K.P. Vb, 296, 454.

a consul and I have also been one) you must know that nothing would delight the Zanzibar consul better than to have the thwarting of such a scheme, inasmuch as it would bring him into notice and give him an opportunity to write to the F.O.<sup>1</sup> Burton of course, knew East Africa well and provided the information wanted; but, intent as Gordon evidently was on the project, he apparently did not contemplate taking any part himself in its execution. He was absorbed all that year in the continuance of the previous year's work. A second envoy, Ernest Linant de Bellefonds, was sent to Mtesa's court—where, as it chanced, he found H. M. Stanley on the eve of his famous journey through the Congo country to the sea—and obtained the tyrant's promise, for what it was worth, to forbid the buying and selling of slaves in his country. Gordon himself was engaged in getting a steamer slowly up a series of bad stretches of the Nile until in October he was baffled by the seventh and last cataract, the Fola Falls, just as Livingstone had been baffled by the Kebrabasa Rapids on the Zambesi.<sup>2</sup> 'It is all over!' he exclaimed; but on November 15 a mail arrived from Cairo—he was then at Moogie about 100 miles south of Gondokoro—with a 'thick packet' from the Khedive informing him that his plan of 'piercing' by another route to the sea had not only been approved but was being actually put into operation.<sup>3</sup>

## 2

The idea of extending Egyptian rule to the Indian Ocean was not, as a matter of fact, 'entirely' Gordon's. Ismail had conceived it a few years earlier. In 1871 he commissioned one of his American officers, Colonel Purdy, to proceed with an expedition to Mombasa and thence march inland between Mounts Kenya and Kilimanjaro to Lake Victoria. Somewhere in the highlands near Kilimanjaro he was to establish a military post on a permanent footing. He was to take a prudent line with the traders in slaves and ivory. 'The native peoples must understand that the purpose of our mission has nothing in common with that of

<sup>1</sup> G. to B., 17. vii. 75: W. H. Wilkins, *The Romance of Isabel Lady Burton* (London, 1897), ii. 646-50.

<sup>2</sup> Allen, 59: cf. *Kirk on the Zambesi*, 129-31.

<sup>3</sup> *Gordon in Central Africa*, 146.



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the traders, and the traders that you are not there to injure their interests.' To provide a diplomatic cloak for the enterprise a report was to be put about that a disaster had befallen Baker on the upper Nile and that an expedition was to be rushed from the East African coast to rescue him.<sup>1</sup>

Ismail had countermanded the execution of this adventurous scheme at the last moment; but he had not by any means abandoned it, and, when Gordon suggested it or something very like it, he instantly agreed. 'I adopt your idea, my dear Gordon,' he wrote in that 'thick packet'; 'and I charge you to carry out in all our territory lying between the Lakes and the coast the administration that you have set up in the Lake districts.' He is dispatching, he explains, four or five companies of troops under McKillop Pasha who has been told to occupy the mouth of the Juba and await Gordon there. He is 'to place himself under your orders as soon as he is able to get into touch with you'. The occupation of the country is to be permanent. 'You will have to maintain, and for many years after you it will be necessary to maintain, posts which I suggest you start at once to establish by giving them the organisation of military colonies.' The chief obstacle is the Sultan of Zanzibar who during his recent visit to Cairo on his way home from England had told Ismail that he claimed all the coast up to Ras Hafun. At this point the letter contains an interesting passage which reveals that Gordon had at least hinted to Ismail his fear lest Kirk should intervene. 'You are apprehensive of diplomatic difficulties, and with the practical good sense that is part of your character you admit that these difficulties, if they do arise, will not emanate from the Governments<sup>2</sup> concerned but from some agent who will get these Governments involved to begin with, and then bit by bit will induce them to share or rather to support without sharing his narrow-minded views.' But Ismail was prepared to override any such opposition. From the Juba northwards the country, being Somali country, belonged, he said, to him, and he was confident that his authority there would be admitted, not only because 'commercial interests' were involved, but because the

<sup>1</sup> M. Sabry, *L'Empire Égyptien sous Ismaïl et l'Ingérence Anglo-Française, 1863-1879* (Paris, 1933), 396. See also F. Bonola Bey, *L'Égypte et la Géographie* (Cairo, 1889), 53.

<sup>2</sup> Presumably Ismail is bracketing the British Government with the French in view of the Anglo-French Declaration of 1862.

British Government was aware 'that slave trading can only be suppressed by a Government in the country itself with the will and necessary force to put an end to it'.<sup>1</sup>

A copy of McKillop's instructions was enclosed. He was to disembark at the mouth of the Juba and, while waiting for Gordon, 'establish a regular base' there. The troops were to set up 'military colonies' and grow for their maintenance cereals and vegetables, the seeds of which would be shipped with them. Other permanent posts might be established in the interior. If his occupation of the mouth of the Juba were disputed, he was in the last resort to fight. 'I have every desire to maintain good relations with the Sultan of Zanzibar; but I will not put up with any attempt on my rights, much less usurpation.' If McKillop were approached on the Sultan's behalf 'by an intermediary chosen from the agents accredited to his Government'—again this must be Kirk—'you will refer him to me'. On Gordon's arrival McKillop would hand over all command to him.<sup>2</sup>

Though it was evidently an essential part of Ismail's plan that he should co-operate with McKillop, Gordon decided to ignore his instructions to that effect. The new year found him toiling at the task of transporting the sections of a steamboat overland from the Fola Falls to Lake Albert. 'I have abandoned all idea of going to the sea,' he wrote in the third week of January 1876. The Khedive, he complained, had not taken his advice. He had sent McKillop and his party to wait for him, not at Formosa Bay, but at the mouth of the Juba, whence access to the Lakes was far more difficult. 'They will wait a long time, I think. I am not going to embark on this affair with the miserable and undisciplined troops I have here.'<sup>3</sup> So Gordon went on with his work, indifferent, seemingly, to the course of events which he had set in train on the East African coast.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ismail to Gordon, 17, ix, 75; translated from the French and contributed by Col. E. A. Stanton to the *Journal of the Royal African Society*, xxxiv (1935), 269-82.

<sup>2</sup> Ismail to McK., 17, ix, 75: as in preceding footnote.

<sup>3</sup> Sabry, 488-9. M. Sabry quotes this letter as written on January 18-20 on his way to Mrooli, but does not say to whom it was addressed.

<sup>4</sup> Gordon apparently did not inform Ismail that he was disregarding the instructions he had received on November 15. If he had, Ismail must have told McKillop who, as will be seen, was not told.

Ismail, meantime, had taken Gordon's advice after all. On October 24, 1875, he had sent McKillop a second letter of instructions. As the Juba was said not to be 'suitable for considerable commerce', he was to occupy the anchorage at Formosa Bay or at Port Durnford. He may find the Sultan in possession; but 'how can he maintain order at Formosa and protect interests which will arise there when Gordon has opened communications with the region of the Lakes? . . . All the same, I wish to live on good terms with him, and should some authority have been established there, you are not to molest it, but you are to consider it as non-existent, and you will occupy a portion of the coast by the anchorage which is unoccupied.'<sup>1</sup>

The Sultan, it appears, is now to be more gently treated; nothing is said about fighting. On the other hand the limits of Egyptian sovereignty are to be substantially extended. Formosa Bay is more than 200 miles south of the Juba. An Egyptian frontier fixed there would cover Lamu. And not only at Formosa Bay, it seems, but all up the coast the Sultan's 'authority' is to be 'considered as non-existent': for, once this base has been established, McKillop is 'to journey all along the coast of Africa from Formosa to Berbera', reporting on all the anchorages and submitting recommendations for their improvement and for the erection of lighthouses.

McKillop proceeded to obey these orders as best he could. On September 19 he sailed from Suez with Chaillé-Long who had been recalled from the Sudan to take command on land and lead the westward march to meet Gordon.<sup>2</sup> In the middle of November, just at the time that 'thick packet' from the Khedive reached Gordon at Moogie, the armada—four Egyptian warships with 550 Egyptian troops on board—arrived off Barawa. There was no opposition. The Sultan's garrison were disarmed, his flag hauled down, and the Turkish flag hoisted and saluted by the ships. An attempt was made to win over the Somali not only by appealing to their religious respect for the Caliph at Constantinople and to their belief that he was more than a match for any Christian power, but also by permitting the im-

<sup>1</sup> I. to McK., 29. x. 75: as previously cited.

<sup>2</sup> C. Chaillé-Long, *My Life in Four Continents* (London, 1912), i. 174 ff.

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port and export of slaves.<sup>1</sup> Leaving over 100 men at Barawa in charge of an Egyptian commandant, McKillop then took his squadron down to Kismayu, which was held, so Chaillé-Long narrates, by 400 of the Sultan's soldiers. Egyptian troops were landed and entrenched themselves for the night. 'Before dawn of day I detached a company and led it to the rear of the town, and at a preconcerted signal rushed with fixed bayonets into the unguarded rear of the fortress which was thus happily taken without loss of life.' Formal possession of the town was then assumed, the Turkish flag was hoisted, and a base of operations established. Other places were reconnoitred. Merka and Mogadishu seemed well defended and were left alone. A body of troops were landed at Lamu, but, when their commander observed the Governor's defiant attitude and the sand-bagged battery, he withdrew them. Attempts were made to stir up a revolt against Zanzibar by intrigues with the Chief of Siu and also with the Sultan of Witu, who has been heard of before and will be heard of again.<sup>2</sup> Agents were sent up and down the coast to make it known that the Khedive claimed all East Africa by right and had asserted his claim at Barawa and Kismayu by occupation.<sup>3</sup>

The news of these events in the north sent a wave of excitement and alarm running from port to port. Nowhere was the invasion countenanced except by the lawless riff-raff who welcomed any disturbance for the chance it gave of loot. Arab factiousness was for once repressed: there was no pro-Egyptian party. The Indian traders, finding business at a standstill and fearing the worst, began to embark their goods on dhows in readiness for flight to Zanzibar. 'Mombasa is in a state of panic,' wrote Price the missionary to Kirk: 'there are all sorts of strange reports, and anything and everything is believed.'<sup>4</sup>

Kirk was quite unable to judge what had really happened from the rumours which every dhow from the north brought in to Zanzibar, and on the arrival of H.M.S. *Thetis* from the Seychelles he asked its commander, Captain T. L. Ward, to take

<sup>1</sup> Memorandum on the seizure of Barawa enclosed in K. to D., 2. xii. 75: K.P. Vb, 306. K. to D., 14. xii. 75: *ibid.*, 326.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 114, above, and chapter XVII, below.

<sup>3</sup> The Egyptian operations are described in K. to Derby, 29. xi., 2 and 8. xii. 75: K.P. Vb, 297, 301, 303, 308.

<sup>4</sup> P. to K., 27. xi. 75: K.P. Vb, 310.

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him to the scene of action. He made first for Merka which he found on November 28 still flying the Sultan's flag and garrisoned by 150 soldiers. The Governor told him that Egyptian agents were trying to stir up trouble in the town, but that 'he felt safe against open attack and meant to hold the place to the last'. Mogadishu, similarly, was ready to defend itself with a garrison 200 strong. As has been mentioned in the preceding chapter, so great was 'the fear of Egyptian annexation' that the Somali townsfolk, usually prone to flaunt their independence and their dislike of strangers, especially Europeans, gave Kirk a cordial welcome and protested their loyalty to the Sultan.<sup>1</sup> It was not till he got to Barawa on November 30 that Kirk came into contact with the invaders. He soon found it was a real invasion. When he and Captain Ward went ashore they were stopped on the beach by a party of Egyptian soldiers who demanded what their business was. They were stopped again and interrogated at the entrance to the town. Kirk was intending to visit some of the leading Indian traders for whom he was bringing letters from Zanzibar, but at one point his further progress was forcibly barred. Presently the commandant arrived. Kirk explained his official position and asked permission to go where he wished. 'This being rudely refused and our liberty being interfered with by the soldiers acting under the immediate order of the commandant, we returned on board.' Meantime some officers of the *Thetis*, going ashore to stretch their legs, had been met by Egyptian troops drawn up in order on the beach who 'ostentatiously loaded their rifles' and refused to allow anyone to land. Next morning the *Thetis* was moved to an anchorage within easy gunshot of the town, and a joint protest was addressed to the commandant, insisting on the rights of British officers in the Sultan of Zanzibar's dominions, refusing to admit the authority of the Egyptian commandant, and demanding a written undertaking that there should be no further interference with their freedom ashore. The commandant's rejoinder was peremptory. 'The Khedive of Egypt has taken these countries and established in them guards of soldiers,' under his agent, McKillop Pasha, and three other pashas. No one must land without prior authority from 'the ruler of the country'. Force will be met by force. 'God says in his book: "Do not enter

<sup>1</sup> See p. 251, above.

another's house without his permission."'' The only possible reply to this effusion was an ultimatum. The commandant was informed that action would be taken if the assurances previously requested were not received by 2 p.m., and a proclamation was issued informing the people of Barawa that, if satisfaction were not obtained, the guns of the *Thetis* would open on the town and warning law-abiding folk to leave it. At half-past one the commandant gave in. His Excellency's honoured letter had been received. Of course His Excellency was free to go where he pleased. The commandant would await His Excellency's landing. . . . So Kirk went ashore again with Ward, unarmed and unescorted, and, proceeding to the house of a British Indian merchant where the four other 'banyan' residents were assembled, he arranged that they should all pay a visit to the *Thetis* to show that they were British subjects. Next day (December 2), since there was nothing more they could do, Kirk and his naval colleagues started back to Zanzibar. They touched at Lamu *en route* and found it as ready as Merka and Mogadishu to resist an Egyptian occupation.<sup>1</sup>

Back at Zanzibar Kirk cabled a report to the Foreign Office and followed it up with detailed dispatches by mail. The Khedive's undisguised attempt to annex the northern part of the Zanzibar dominions, he pointed out, had quickly confirmed the anxiety he had often expressed as to 'the stability of the Sultan's power in East Africa'. 'The most dangerous political complication arising out of the dismemberment of the Zanzibar dominions is their solution into separate and irresponsible chiefdoms. . . . Everyone looks to the action taken by the British; and if we hesitate to support the Sultan, we shall have to deal with a state of anarchy on the coast, followed by the ruin of trade which it will take years to re-establish.' The main objective of British policy in East Africa, moreover, would be frustrated by an Egyptian occupation of the coast. The Sultan of Zanzibar was willing to do all that was asked of him for the suppression of the Slave Trade, and at need we had the power to enforce our will. But we had no such hold on the Egyptian Government. 'It is notorious we have no means of giving effect to hollow and vague

<sup>1</sup> K. to D., 2. xii. 75, enclosing letters exchanged between K. and W. and the so-called Governor of Barawa and the text of the proclamation: K.P. Vb, 303-6.

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promises or solemn treaties.' Last, but not least, it was our clear duty to protect the interests of the British Indians at the coast ports, who, like the Sultan, had materially suffered from the humanitarian measures imposed by Britain. To quote the dispatch which Kirk sent to the Government of India on this point: 'The Indian traders have been compelled by us to follow our Slave Trade policy at a loss to themselves without obtaining or even asking for compensation. The Indian community here, amounting to no less than 4,000, whom we have forcibly dispossessed of upwards of 2,000 slaves, can surely ask us to uphold their just rights, guaranteed to them as British subjects under treaty, by the same title as that by which we freed their slaves and placed them under British laws.' On all counts, the Egyptians must be expelled. No half-course was possible.<sup>1</sup>

These reports to the Foreign Office were drafted with official moderation; but in a private letter written to a friend in India Kirk let himself go. He described the Egyptian invasion as 'a filibustering expedition, organised by the Khedive and commanded by English adventurers, worthy of the palmy days of the buccaneers'.<sup>2</sup>

Barghash, meantime, had not been silent. He had dispatched a formal note to the Khedive calling on him to withdraw from the territories of Zanzibar.<sup>3</sup> He had complained through Kirk to Lord Derby of the Egyptian *coup d'état*<sup>4</sup> and in particular of the fact that the expedition was commanded by a British naval officer.<sup>5</sup> And he had written in similar terms to the British Resident at Aden.<sup>6</sup> He had telegraphed, moreover, to his old friend, Dr. Badger, asking him to 'tell the English people what had happened'. Badger sent the telegram to the editor of *The Times* who printed it with a leading article, inviting the

<sup>1</sup> K. to D., 2, 8 and 14. xii. 75; K. to G. of I., 10. xii. 75 (enclosing a memorial from Zanzibar 'banyans', declaring that goods worth over £50,000 were in the hands of their agents at the Somali ports): K.P. Vb, 297, 301, 308, 311, 326. The Indian community at Lamu, numbering about 50, appealed to Kirk when he called there and used the same argument as he put to the Government of India in the passage quoted above.

<sup>2</sup> K. to F. T. Carnegie, 10. ii. 76: private correspondence.

<sup>3</sup> Stanton to Derby, 7. i. 76: K.P. Vb, 333.

<sup>4</sup> Sultan to K., 15. xii. 75: K.P. Vb, 322.

<sup>5</sup> F.O. to K., 31. xii. 75 (MS. in K.P. V).

<sup>6</sup> Sultan to Schneider, 27. xi. 75: K.P. Vb, 298.

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Powers who had treaties with Zanzibar to put a stop to proceedings 'which at present can only be regarded as a wanton outrage'.<sup>1</sup>

The British Resident at Aden had cabled to the Government of India, reporting the Egyptian invasion and suggesting the dispatch of a warship to Zanzibar 'to reassert British influence on the East African coast'. But Lord Northbrook, the Viceroy, as he later informed Lord Salisbury, decided to take no action. 'The state of affairs between the Khedive and Zanzibar is better known to Her Majesty's Government than to me.'<sup>2</sup> The Foreign Office for its part cabled to Kirk on December 4. Inquiries were being made in Cairo; the British Government would do all they could to put an end to the 'misunderstanding'; and meantime 'a collision with the Egyptian forces should be avoided if possible'.<sup>3</sup> But the conduct of the Egyptians made it none too easy to avoid an 'incident' of some kind. An Egyptian steamship had the hardihood to put in at Zanzibar to obtain coal for McKillop's squadron, and Kirk had some difficulty in persuading the Sultan not to seize the 'enemy' vessel.<sup>4</sup> As it was, he sent it back to Kismayu laden with coal and with fruit in profusion. 'My brother,' ran the accompanying message to 'the Commander of the Egyptians', 'I send you the coal you desire, also fruit. The latter may serve to keep you in good health, the former to take you away from my country. Go, and peace be with you.'<sup>5</sup> The next 'awkwardness' occurred at Barawa. A French dhow, bound for Merka from Mayotta, was boarded by Egyptian officers who took the captain and some of his crew ashore and deprived him of his flag and papers. The French consul, de Gaspary, when he heard of it at Zanzibar, telegraphed for a French gun-boat then in the Persian Gulf.<sup>6</sup> Shortly afterwards there was similar interference at Barawa with a *bugala*, owned by a British Indian of Zanzibar. Two signal guns and a keg of powder were removed, and the payment of 30 dollars' port-dues demanded. References

<sup>1</sup> *The Times*, 1. xii. 75.

<sup>2</sup> Telegrams from Aden and Calcutta, 27 and 28. xii. 75, enclosed in I.O. to F.O., 7. i. 76: K.P. Vb, 297.

<sup>3</sup> Repeated in K. to D., 14. xii. 75: K.P. Vb, 326.

<sup>4</sup> F.O. to K., 31. xii. 75, approving K.'s action. MS. insertion in K.P. V.

<sup>5</sup> Chaillé-Long, i, 182-3. C.-L. is not a trustworthy authority (see Allen, 83-96), but he gives the text of this letter in full, and it is difficult to think that he invented it. For Barghash's sense of humour, see p. 216, note 2, above.

<sup>6</sup> K. to D., 13. xii. 75: K.P. Vb, 315.



to the rights of British subjects and the British consul-general were met with hearty curses of the British.<sup>1</sup>

Kirk agreed with de Gaspary in regarding such 'high-handed assertion of territorial authority and jurisdiction by a Mohammedan power over the flag of a Christian nation in what it is pleased to call its harbour' as intolerable; and he informed the Foreign Office that, since three warships, *Diamond*, *Vestal* and *Flying Fish*, were at Zanzibar besides the *Thetis*, there was ample force for any action that might be decided on. Meantime, in obedience to his instructions, the measures he took to check further Egyptian aggression were cautious and defensive. Lieutenant Carew, R.N., was dispatched to Lamu to act as vice-consul there, while the *Diamond* was sent to Manda, the nearest harbour to Lamu, in order at the same time to support the vice-consul and to overawe the neighbouring Bajun tribes. To the chief of those tribes Kirk wrote to say that any disturbance in his country provoked by Egyptian intrigue would be summarily repressed and punished.<sup>2</sup> It was suggested to de Gaspary, who gratefully assented, that Carew should protect the interests of the branch of the French firm of Roux, Frassinetti & Co. at Lamu.<sup>3</sup> Kirk made it clear to Lord Derby that an Egyptian attack on Lamu would be resisted, but this, he wrote, 'is a step that nothing but imperative necessity will force me to think of.'<sup>4</sup>

## 4

As a matter of fact the risk of an open clash with the Egyptians was slight. McKillop, as will be seen, was as anxious as Kirk to avoid a fight. His position, indeed, was far from satisfactory. The occupation of Barawa had been easy enough, and he himself was safely established at Kismayu. But the further execution of Gordon's project seemed barred by the unexpected resistance of the Sultan of Zanzibar and his Governors and garrisons on the coast, backed, it was only too clear, by the British consul-general. And of Gordon himself he had no news at all. He made one attempt to report to him; but this communication, as it happened, fell into the hands of the Governor of

<sup>1</sup> K. to D., 15. xii. 75: K.P. Vb, 322.

<sup>2</sup> K. to D., 15. xii. 75: K.P. Vb, 325.

<sup>3</sup> K. to D., 20. xii. 75, enclosing de G. to K., 19. xii. 75: K.P. Vb, 342.

<sup>4</sup> K. to D., 14. xii. 75: K.P. Vb, 327.

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Lamu who sent it to the Sultan who in turn showed it, as usual, to Kirk. As a succinct account of the whole strange affair it deserves quotation in full.

*Mouth of River Juba,  
December 1875.*

My dear Gordon,

As I trust you will have a copy of my orders, which the Khedive tells me he has sent, I need not state the object of my being sent here. Our getting here at all was quite problematical, as we were sent away short of everything—coal, water and stores—and such a coast! However, I will not treat you to a list of my wants and miseries; I dare say you have enough of your own.

Now, as to carrying out the orders to push up towards the Lake country to meet you, we are totally devoid of any sort of transport. I have 400 soldiers here and 150 at Barawa, 16 horses, 8 mules, no camels and no bullocks. I cannot move any of my ships to seek for these things, not having a ton of coal amongst them, and have been most unwillingly obliged to send one of my postal steamers to Zanzibar to procure coal and stores to enable me to open the communication *via* Berbera and Massawa with Cairo.

The likeliest road to take to meet you (if we get transport) seems to me to be a straight line due west by south from a few miles south of the equator for Mount Kenya. The Somali here are afraid of approaching the Galla people. I am trying to induce some of them to take this letter and try and find you out.

*November 22.* Since writing the above we have had a steamer in from Suez with orders for me to go and take possession of Formosa Bay, from whence I will endeavour to dispatch to you.

[A month later McKillop, having found no postman, continued his letter.]

*December 22.* Since writing the above I have been to Formosa, and found it an open bay, and no fresh water for a station. I then went to Lamu which I did not occupy as I should have had to use force against the Zanzibar troops. I have now, however, orders to return to Suez—troops and all. I shall send this on the chance of it reaching you from Lamu by one of the caravans. The chances are so small that I will not add more to this, but wishing you continued success,

H. F. MCKILLOP.

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P.S.—Lamu is [the] point to make for if the scheme is still to be carried out, or, better still, Mombasa; it is all Zanzibar territory as far as the coast is considered.

H. F. McK.<sup>1</sup>

Before Kirk saw this letter, he knew that all danger from McKillop's operations was over. On January 6 he heard that the Egyptians had constructed a fortified camp outside Barawa to which all but fifty of their troops in the town had been withdrawn, but that the Somali chiefs at Merka had received messages intimating that an Egyptian attack was imminent. A petition also reached Kirk at this time from the leading British Indian trader at Kismayu complaining of Egyptian exactions and begging for help to remove his goods.<sup>2</sup> On January 8 a report came in from Carew at Lamu that the Egyptians had evacuated Kismayu and sailed away northwards. Letters also arrived that day from British Indians and an Arab at Kismayu, saying that the Egyptian officers had told them they were 'totally abandoning' the place.<sup>3</sup> On January 13, the Egyptian squadron being then reported at anchor off Port Durnford and Barawa still occupied, Kirk decided to go and see for himself what was happening. Sailing again in the *Thetis* with Captain Ward, and bearing letters from the Sultan putting all the Governors 'under my direction', he went first to Lamu, where, as Barghash had suggested, he took the Governor on board for the rest of the voyage in order that through him the Sultan's authority might be associated with 'the prestige attending the presence of a British ship of war'. At Port Durnford there was no sign of the Egyptian squadron, nor at Kismayu, where it was reported that Barawa also had been evacuated by the Egyptians and reoccupied by the Governor of Merka.<sup>4</sup> As a matter of fact the army of occupation was now well on its way home. About

<sup>1</sup> McKillop Pasha to Gordon Pasha, Dec. '75; copy enclosed in K. to D., 2. ii. 76: K.P. Vb, 377. The letter must have been begun before November 22: hence the initial date, December, must be a mistake or have been inserted later. McKillop entrusted the letter to a 'banyan' who surrendered it to the Governor of Lamu. McKillop wrote to Stanton in April: 'I had no choice as to landing at Kismayu. I had not a ton of coal, a pint of oil or tallow for engines, and, having drowned two officers and seven men at the mouth of the muddy stream, I was obliged to seek a port.' McK. to S., 11. iv. 76: *Journal of the Royal African Society*, xxxiv (1935), 282.

<sup>2</sup> K. to D., 6. i. 76: K.P. Vb, 358.

<sup>3</sup> K. to D., 8. i. 76: K.P. Vb, 358.

<sup>4</sup> K. to D., 2. ii. 76: K.P. Vb, 374.

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December 25, as has been seen, a packet-boat had arrived at Kismayu with laconic orders to McKillop from the Khedive. 'Withdraw your command and return at once to Egypt.' It had taken a little time to 'pack up', but the squadron had left Kismayu on January 20 and got back to Suez on February 5. The invaders had come and gone within two months.<sup>1</sup>

Soon after his return to Zanzibar Kirk saw McKillop's letter and so learned for the first time that another British servant of the Khedive, more famous and more formidable than McKillop, was concerned in the invasion of East Africa. The Foreign Office also had now heard of it from Cairo, and in due course Kirk received a warning that, if Gordon reached the coast, he must be regarded as a very different person from McKillop. Kirk was to ask the Sultan to see that 'any assistance is afforded to that officer of which he may stand in need, and that steps are taken to ensure his being treated as a friend and not as the leader of a hostile expedition'. Her Majesty's Government would much regret it if any harm should befall Colonel Gordon at the hands of the Zanzibar authorities 'after his long and arduous expedition'.<sup>2</sup> But several weeks before Kirk received that dispatch it was reported from Egypt that Gordon was still in the Sudan.<sup>3</sup> He was, in fact, at Lado when he heard from Cairo what had happened to McKillop. He wrote at once to Lord Derby to take the blame of the business, such as it was, on his own shoulders.

'It is only fair to the Khedive that I should state that I am entirely responsible for the Egyptian expedition to Zanzibar. . . . I felt sure that, unless European trade sprang up in the interior, viz. the Lake districts, no progress of any import would take place by the efforts of the Egyptians or Zanzibarites. The Khedive took my advice, therefore, to secure a place on the sea-coast. . . . The expedition was not one of conquest like this expedition, but was simply to ease his communications with the Lake districts, and it was at my earnest request that he undertook it.'

The difficulty, Gordon suggested, was ignorance of the fron-

<sup>1</sup> Chaillé-Long, 192-4.

<sup>2</sup> F.O. to Kirk, 10. iii. 76: K.P. Vb, 384.

<sup>3</sup> Stanton to Derby, 29. iii. 76: K.P. Vb, 388.

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tiers. If the Sultan of Zanzibar would state the extent of his territory, no objection could be made to the Khedive's occupation of the country to the north of it. In the matter of the Slave Trade there was little to choose between Sultan and Khedive. Slavery would continue to exist under both.<sup>1</sup>

### 5

The departure of McKillop and his troops did not mean that the Zanzibar dominions were out of danger. The Khedive had withdrawn his expedition but not his aspirations. He realised that he—or was it Gordon?—had made a mistake. A quarrel with so small a fellow-potentate as the Sultan of Zanzibar would not have troubled him, but unfortunately his officers had quarrelled also with the British Government in the person of Kirk. Gordon, as has been seen, had warned him of that danger—it had seemed the only danger—to the success of the expedition; and he had hoped to evade it by telling McKillop to request any diplomatic 'agent' who approached him to deal direct with Cairo. Unfortunately it was not McKillop who had come into contact with Kirk but an Egyptian 'jack in office' who had not merely dealt with Kirk on his own responsibility but treated him with gross discourtesy. That was why Ismail instantly recalled McKillop when he heard what had happened, and why, though he made no apology, despite a hint from British quarters that he should, to Barghash, he apologised to General Stanton, the British consul-general at Cairo, for the incident at Barawa and promised that the 'most serious example' should be made of the commandant.<sup>2</sup> As to the invasion in general he pleaded that it had been undertaken in entire ignorance of the Sultan's territorial claims, and Stanton admitted that he would scarcely have dispatched an expedition 'so ill-provided and so utterly inefficient . . . had he contemplated hostilities with any more serious antagonist than the native tribes inhabiting the coast'.<sup>3</sup> But a

<sup>1</sup> G. to D., 20. iii. 76: K.P. Vb, 454.

<sup>2</sup> S. to Derby, 12. ii. 76: K.P. Vb, 366.

<sup>3</sup> S. to D., 29. iii. 76: K.P. Vb, 388. The following note by Nubar Pasha (Cairo, 7. xii. 75) gives the official view: 'Depuis plus d'un an le colonel Gordon pressait le Khédive d'ouvrir une communication entre les lacs et l'Océan Indien. Le Khédive a vu, dans l'idée du colonel Gordon, non seulement le moyen d'ouvrir au commerce une communication plus facile avec

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port on the Indian Ocean, said Ismail, he must obtain, by diplomacy if not by force. He had spent upwards of £1,000,000 in trying to open up equatorial Africa and stop the Slave Trade 'in deference to the wishes of England' and was losing heavily from the consequent fall in his revenue from the Sudan. 'Without an outlet to the coast this expenditure would be useless, as Colonel Gordon had already pointed out to him. The distance of the Lake districts from Egypt by the Nile route was so great and the difficulties of keeping open communication so serious that it was unreasonable to expect him to continue to sacrifice men and money in the attempt to civilise those regions and suppress the Slave Trade unless he was enabled in the end to profit by those sacrifices.' An Egyptian port on the coast would also be 'of benefit to commerce in general but above all to British commerce'; so that on every ground he expected the British Government to help him to obtain it. The Somali ports were open roadsteads, and the first good harbour down the coast was Kismayu. 'He was perfectly willing to pay a reasonable sum to the Sultan of Zanzibar for the cession of that place.' If he did not get it, he would have to withdraw Gordon from the lakes and 'consolidate his position farther north'. Such a step, he was aware, implied the abandonment of the south to the Slave Trade.<sup>1</sup>

That was Egypt's case, put by Ismail with all his customary adroitness. Zanzibar's answer was given no less capably by Kirk, whom the Foreign Office asked for a full opinion on the matter before negotiations were continued at Cairo. Kirk opened with an attack—to be mournfully justified in a few years' time—on the strength of the Khedive's position in the Lake country. It was a 'gratuitous assumption that the Nile Lakes and the adjacent regions, explored and hitherto made known by Englishmen alone . . . are Egypt's by right', and they had not yet been acquired by conquest since there were parts of the country to which the Egyptian troops had never penetrated and parts in

les lacs, mais en même temps aussi le seul moyen d'écraser à jamais la Traite. C'est dans ce but que Son Altesse a expédié McKillop Pacha sur le littoral de l'Océan. Son Altesse savait que l'Imam de Zanzibar avait des prétentions sur le littoral, mais Elle savait, en même temps, que ce n'était que des prétentions et que l'autorité du Sultan de Zanzibar ne s'exerçait que d'une manière illusoire. . . . F.O. 78. 3188.

<sup>1</sup> Cave to Derby, 5. i. 76; Stanton to D., 9. i., 12. ii., 18. ii., and 29. iii. 76; K.P. Vb, 298, 333, 369, 388.

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which they 'can barely hold their own'. And what was the real purpose of this southward move with its proposed extension eastwards to the coast? 'The Khedive, after a large expenditure in men and treasure, finds he has just reached the borders of a country rich in ivory and other produce, the trade of which has flowed to Zanzibar through the various ports on the east coast of Africa, and that it is impossible for him to divert this trade, as he at first anticipated, down the Nile to Alexandria, a distance of over 2,000 miles, so as to compete profitably in that field with Zanzibar traders and British Indians, in whose hands on the coast the trade is at present held and who approach the same region for the purpose of selling their merchandise after a journey of only 500 miles.' Clearly it was not the suppression of the trade in slaves but a monopoly of the trade in ivory and other produce in equatorial Africa that the Khedive had at heart. No sooner, for example, had his officers reached Uganda than they had tried to persuade its ruler to exclude the Zanzibar traders from their long-standing intercourse with his country. To obtain such a monopoly, moreover, the occupation of Kismayu would be insufficient; and it was evident from McKillop's intercepted letter that the project of invasion had not been confined to the northern part of the Zanzibar dominions. The Sultan, finally, was unlikely to consent to the cession of Kismayu, not only because he had been deeply offended by the Khedive's secret attempt on the coast and his subsequent refusal to apologise to him, but also because a port in Egyptian hands would necessarily acquire a great deal of the trade now flowing to Zanzibar and might prove a stepping-stone to further territorial aggrandisement.

But the main objection remained as Kirk had stated it in his first report on the invasion. 'No one seriously credits the Khedive with being more earnest than the Sultan of Zanzibar in his wish to suppress the Slave Trade. Both undoubtedly act under various influences in this matter. But over the latter we have by treaty, by our paramount commercial position in the country, by political relations and old tradition, an influence and power we can never hope to exercise over the Egyptian Government.' The Sultan's authority, Kirk concluded, was now well established on the Somali coast. Every landing-place south of War-sheikh was in the hands of Zanzibar garrisons under whose pro-

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tection British Indian trade was fast increasing. A stronger government was certainly desirable, but not that of 'a needy Mohammedan slave-holding despot'. Occupation by any leading European nation would be a different matter; and 'the shortest, the cheapest and the most effectual way to stop the Slave Trade' was to put 'any well chosen sea-port under our protection and administration'.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the suppression of the Slave Trade stands out once more as the dominant consideration. The conflict, in fact, viewed from the British angle, was not so much between Ismail and Barghash as between Gordon and Kirk. Each was primarily concerned to use his influence with the sovereign with whom he was associated in order to suppress the Slave Trade; and Kirk was unquestionably right in thinking that on the east coast of Africa Barghash was the more effective instrument of British policy than Ismail. The Egyptian invasion, as it happened, occurred on the morrow of the Proclamation abolishing Slavery in the Somali ports and on the eve of the Proclamation prohibiting the Slave Trade by land.<sup>2</sup>

Another contribution to the discussion came from Frere who headed a deputation to Lord Derby to urge further measures for the suppression of the Trade. He emphasised the 'very effective efforts of the Sultan of Zanzibar, aided and directed by Dr. Kirk, to carry out the provisions of the treaties in the spirit as well as the letter'. But at the same time he recommended that 'a good port' should be acquired by Egypt on the south-east coast of Somaliland. If this could not be done without infringing 'the present limits of Zanzibar authority', a cession should be negotiated in return for a fixed subsidy paid by Egypt to Zanzibar.<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately Frere had not reserved this opinion for official ears in London. A year earlier, as will presently be seen, he had let it be known in Cairo.

It was Kirk's advice that carried the day. No answer was made to the Khedive's demand for Kismayu. He was informed

<sup>1</sup> K. to D., 6. iii. and 4. iv. 76: K.P. Vb, 418, 448.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 224, above.

<sup>3</sup> Memorandum, 6. vi. 76, inserted in K.P. V. When he was at Cairo in December 1872 discussing the suppression of the Slave Trade with the Khedive, Frere already contemplated Egypt's obtaining a port on the coast, though he did not specify the locality. Memorandum on the Slave Trade and Slavery in Egypt: K.P. IIIa, 23.



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that, provided he maintained free trade, for the special benefit of Aden, and prohibited the export of slaves, the British Government were prepared to recognise his rule over the Somali coast, but only as far south as Cape Guardafui.<sup>1</sup> Ismail acquiesced, for the time being at any rate, in this tacit rejection of his demand for a port on the Indian Ocean. No more was heard of Kismayu.

Thus for the moment the Egyptian threat to the integrity of Barghash's dominions had come to nothing. But the danger had been real and there was no doubt as to who had averted it. The British Government had once warned Mohammed Ali off Oman;<sup>2</sup> and now they had warned the inheritor of Mohammed Ali's imperialism off mid-East Africa. Barghash himself was well aware to whom the preservation of his realm was due. When he heard that the Egyptian forces had been withdrawn as the result of British pressure at Cairo, he told Kirk that, 'great as had been the favours shown to himself and to his ancestors by the British Government, he had never before understood the force of the disinterested friendship of Her Majesty's Government for his country.'<sup>3</sup> That was official phrasing, and Kirk put it more pithily in a letter to Wylde. 'The Sultan is greatly delighted. He thinks that, if Derby were a Mussulman, he would have been a fit companion of the Prophet.'<sup>4</sup>

### 5

Ismail's threat to withdraw from Equatorial Africa altogether if he were refused his port did not materialise. On the contrary, in May 1876 the Egyptian Government announced that Gordon Pasha had 'annexed to Egypt all the territories round Lakes Victoria and Albert'.<sup>5</sup> That was not the language of retreat. Vague as it was, it clearly covered more ground than Gordon had yet mastered. Uganda, it would seem, had been 'annexed'. But in fact the Egyptian advance had halted, and it was not till

<sup>1</sup> Stanton to D., 7. iv. 76: K.P. Vb, 422; cf. Cave to D., 5. i. 76: *ibid.*, 298. In the event this recognition was extended to Ras Hafun, some 200 miles south of Cape Guardafui, by the Anglo-Egyptian Convention of September 7, 1877.

<sup>2</sup> See *East Africa and its Invaders*, 470.

<sup>3</sup> K. to D., 11. i. 76: K.P. Vb, 359.

<sup>4</sup> K. to W., 13. i. 76: private correspondence.

<sup>5</sup> Stanton to D., 6. v. 76, enclosing official bulletin: K.P. Vb, 452.

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1879 that Kirk's fears were again aroused by the news of Emin Pasha's operations on the borders of Uganda. Emin's progress, it was reported, had been obstructed by Mtesa. 'An incident such as this', Kirk wrote to Salisbury, 'may lead to a further movement south on the part of the Egyptians and serve as a pretext for further annexations.'<sup>1</sup> Questions were asked in Cairo and assurances obtained. At that time, as will be seen, Ismail's downfall was imminent. He could scarcely cling to his ambitions in the south when his hold on Egypt itself was slipping. One of the last statements made by his Government was that they had 'no intention whatever of making further annexations in Central Africa nor of encroaching on King Mtesa's territories'.<sup>2</sup>

But it was not Ismail's intervention in East Africa that Kirk had real reason to fear. Gordon, not Ismail, had actually proposed the invasion of 1875, and its failure had not weakened his conviction that the best way to get to grips with the Nilotic Slave Trade was the 'short cut' from the sea. It was confirmed, indeed, by his experience during the months that followed McKillop's withdrawal. The farther he penetrated southwards, opening up the way to Lake Albert, consolidating his authority with little military posts, 'annexing' a vast and indefinite area, the more he realised that he was failing to achieve the main purpose of all this work as he conceived it. Like Baker, he could not destroy the Slave Trade beyond striking distance from the Nile because he could not prevent the 'slavers' taking their victims overland through the Sudan with the connivance of his Egyptian colleague at Khartum. It was a false, an intolerable position, and Gordon was not the man to endure it. At the end of the year he returned to Cairo, explained the situation to Ismail, and sailed for home where, after a few weeks' hesitation, he decided to resign his post. But that did not mean resigning his fight with the Trade. In those same weeks in London, as it happened, Horace Waller had put him in touch with a little group of business men, headed by William Mackinnon, who, as will appear in the next chapter, were planning to form a company and obtain a concession for the development of mid-East Africa. Hearing that Gordon was home and might be unemployed, they asked him, through Waller, if he would take charge

<sup>1</sup> K. to S., 1. v. 79; K.P. Vc, 102.

<sup>2</sup> F.O. to K., 25. vi. 79, enclosing Vivian to S., 13. vi. 79; K.P. Vc, 132.

of the whole scheme. 'My idea is', he replied, 'that they should get from the Sultan of Zanzibar a concession for ten years for opening his country, giving rights to levy troops and securing freedom from customs duty and monopoly of the trade, etc. I imagine the Sultan would require to have some advantage in all this in the shape of an export due.' The essential point, he goes on, is to secure a safe anchorage on the coast: he suggests the mouth of the Ozi or the Tana or Port Durnford. 'As far as I am concerned, I can know nothing of the concessions necessary. What I would do would be (when the concessions are obtained and a headquarters established) to act as I have done in the Province of the Equator, *viz.* select the best line towards the interior and establish a post on the same, raise the troops and command them, and see to the communications with the headquarters. . . . I am most particular on this point, *viz.* that I should not be directly mixed up with the venture in any commercial way; for, if I did so, I never could get leave from the Government. Of course, in any case this is not a certainty, but I *think* that, if I asked for two years' leave to travel in Central Africa, I might get it; and then, if it suits me to explore in the direction of the operations of the intended Company, I think no one could say a word; for, if they gave Cameron leave, they will give me the same. You will clearly see how open to misconstruction it would be if I took entire charge of the venture for which I am totally unfit. My ideas, though I hug them, are quixotic and unpractical, and I would concede points to carry them out that would, if conceded, be the death-blow to commercial success or to practical work. . . . Let the promoters of the scheme think over it and decide on their action on which I can have no opinion; let them consider my services as explorer and establisher of communications at their disposal (and my terms and wants will be small) and only as that. . . .'<sup>1</sup>

What happened to the scheme will presently be seen, but Gordon was to play no part in it. That letter was written on the very day on which he received a telegram from Cairo summoning him back to Africa (January 17, 1877). Ismail could be as resolute as Gordon. At their last meeting he had persuaded him to say *au revoir*; and now he begged him to return to Egypt to finish the work they had begun together. 'I refuse to believe

<sup>1</sup> G. to H. W., 17. i. 77: Waller Papers.

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that, when Gordon has given his word as a gentleman, anything will ever induce him to go back on it.' In February Gordon was back in Cairo, and there he was soon bound again to Ismail's service by an offer so bold and trustful that he could not refuse it. Darfur and the Equatorial Provinces were to be united with the Sudan in one great government and Gordon was to be Governor-General, charged as before with two primary tasks, 'the suppression of Slavery and the improvement of the means of communication'.<sup>1</sup>

For the next two years Gordon was fully occupied with administrative routine at Khartum, with tours to the Red Sea ports, and with expeditions against the 'slavers' in Darfur. Living, as he always did, at high pressure, he found by the summer of 1879 that his physical strength was breaking down under the 'long crucifixion', as he called it, of work and worry under a tropical sun; and he had already made up his mind to resign when he heard that Ismail had fallen. His financial difficulties, in which Britain and France were primarily involved, had been brought to a head by Bismarck's unexpected threat to intervene on behalf of a small minority of German bondholders. Under joint pressure from the Powers the Sultan of Turkey had deposed Ismail, and it was to his successor, Tewfik, that Gordon handed in his resignation. Seemingly his work on the upper Nile was finished. At the end of 1879 he undertook a mission of peace to King John of Abyssinia. In 1880 he was in India for a few weeks in the uncongenial and quickly abandoned post of private secretary to the new Viceroy, Lord Ripon, and in China for two months at Li Hung Chang's request for his help in settling a dispute with Russia.

All this time Kirk was quite in the dark as to Gordon's ideas about East Africa. But, if he had known of his offer to work with Mackinnon's group in January 1877, he would probably have welcomed it. Mackinnon's project was very different from the McKillop affair. It recognised the Sultan's sovereignty. Its execution would be in British hands. But it was another matter when Gordon, back in the Sudan, decided to put a new edition of the scheme in operation on his own account. In June 1878 he arranged at Khartum that Gessi should lead an expedition up

<sup>1</sup> Allen, 105-8.

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the Sobat River and make his way through the unknown wilderness to the Juba and so to the sea. Gordon was to supply him with 300 soldiers and equipment for transport on land and water. The carrying out of this plan was only, it seems, prevented by the sudden revolt of the 'slavers' under Zebehr's son, Suliman, and the need of giving Gessi the command against it.

Kirk, of course, knew nothing of that, and he may have thought, as time went on, that Gordon had lost interest in East Africa. In the winter of 1879, however, he at last received a direct communication from Gordon, then in Abyssinia, written in his customary cursive style. 'It is quite true that I recommended the Expedition to East Coast to the late Khedive, but at the same time I told Nubar and H.H. that, prior to any move, the consent of England must be obtained: in letters which the Ex-K. and Nubar wrote to me, they tell me that they had sounded Sir Bartle Frere, who was passing through Cairo with H.R.H. Pce Wales and that Sir B. Frere had said H.M.G. would approve of the occupation. Neither H.H. nor Nubar would have ordered it, had not Sir B. F. told them this, remember please the Egyptn. occupation was close after capture of Mombasa,<sup>1</sup> and therefore Egypt knew well England guarded the coast. Secrecy was certainly wrongly maintained towards Sultan Zanzibar. I had recommended the Sultan should be asked where his frontier ended to the N. and that the whole affair should be then settled diplomatically, before the start of the expedition: of course all this is over now, but I still doubt if the Sultan has any right north of Equator, or if the ports benefit by his possession of them.'<sup>2</sup>

A few months later came another letter from Gordon, posted at Aden on his way to India.

My dear Doctor Kirke,

I am going to India with Lord Ripon, as Private Secretary on probation.

You must have seen that both the Missionaries and Explorers by their operations will ere long raise questions which will cause a deal of trouble and bother both to you and the Sultan. Now I think it would be better for all concerned, if the Sultan appointed a Govr. Genl. of the mainland. The man whom I would re-

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 249-50, above.

<sup>2</sup> G. to K., 23. xi. 79: K.P. *misc.*

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commend you or rather the Sultan to take is Captain Foote, R.N.<sup>1</sup> He ought to have title Govr. General, a contract for 3 yrs at £3,000 a year, if dismissed before 3 years then he ought to have his pay for the time he serves plus 6 months pay, ditto if he falls sick: if he leaves on his own acct., then he ought to have 3 months pay, beyond the time he has actually served. He ought to be (as I was) lent to the Sultan, he would use the Sultan's flag. If this was done then the British Squadron might be greatly diminished and much money saved to England. Foote would soon stop the slave trade and increase the revenues of Customs Houses.

Believe me,

Yours sincerely,

C. E. GORDON.<sup>2</sup>

Another six months and it seemed as if Gordon and Kirk were to meet. Before he left for India Gordon had been to Brussels and seen King Leopold—another of those few individual Europeans on whom the fate of Central Africa at this time so strangely depended—and had promised to help him in his avowed intention to fight the Slave Trade on the Congo. But Leopold was interested in East Africa also, and Gordon, when in India, was invited to join the Belgian expedition then starting on its march into the interior.<sup>3</sup> A passage from Bombay to Zanzibar had actually been arranged for him when he was diverted to China, and the next intimation Kirk received of his plans was a telegram dispatched from Aden on his homeward voyage in September 1880. 'Would my visit Zanzibar be desirable?' it ran. To which Kirk replied: 'Personally most glad to see you: can say no more.' The note of hesitation was due, as Kirk explained to Granville, to his ignorance of what Gordon intended to do. Was it to carry out in person the bold suggestion he had made in his last letter? What Kirk thought of Captain Foote is not on record; but Gordon in charge of East Africa? With a fine disregard of all personal considerations Kirk warmly welcomed that idea. 'If the Sultan of Zanzibar', he told Granville, 'were to place the interior of Africa in his [Gordon's] hands and leave

<sup>1</sup> Captain C. E. Foot, R.N., was British consul in Nyasaland and died at Blantyre in 1884. K. to G., 20. x. 84: K.P. Xb, 248.

<sup>2</sup> G. to K., 7. v. 80: K.P. *misc.*

<sup>3</sup> See Chapter XV, below.

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the administration to him, it would be undoubtedly good for the country.' But Barghash could not be expected to go that length unless Gordon brought an official request to that effect from the British Government. Was that, however, the meaning of Gordon's telegram? Possibly he had resumed the commission from King Leopold which he had dropped so suddenly a year before. Kirk hoped not. 'I feel sure from what I have seen of the Belgian officers employed by the International Association that Colonel Gordon would find great difficulty in working with them. . . . At the same time I am personally most desirous to learn the views of so experienced an officer, and to have an opportunity of making him acquainted with the very limited powers which under existing treaties the Sultan of Zanzibar holds over foreigners in whose hands the trade of the interior now lies. . . . I hope, therefore, that Colonel Gordon will find it possible to visit Zanzibar now, and, if he comes, shall do my best to induce the Sultan to consider favourably any scheme that offers a hope of establishing authority and order in Central Africa.'<sup>1</sup>

Gordon did not come. He wrote to Barghash regretting that he could not wait for the next mailboat. 'I was anxious to disabuse Your Highness of any idea you may have formed that I desired to annex your territory.' He had told the Khedive that he must 'arrange with the Sultan of Zanzibar prior to any action': otherwise the expedition would be a failure.<sup>2</sup>

If Gordon had met Kirk at Zanzibar, the course of history might have been changed. For, diverse as they were in personality, the one impulsive, idealistic, emotional, the other wary, practical, deliberate, their deepest interest in Africa was the same—the rescue of its peoples from slaughter and enslavement. Might not the two men, if only they had come together, have joined hands in their common cause? Might not Gordon with Kirk's backing have done more for Barghash than he had done for Ismail? But, while the thread of destiny binding Gordon to Africa had not been broken in 1879, it was not to Zanzibar or Mombasa that it drew him back. At the beginning of 1884 he accepted his last mission to Khartum.

<sup>1</sup> K. to G., 22. ix. 80: K.P. VII. 519.

<sup>2</sup> G. to Sultan, 20. ix. 80: *ibid.*, 528.

# XIV

## THE MACKINNON CONCESSION

(1877-1878)

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### I

Within twelve months or so of the Egyptian invasion East Africa was again approached from without. But it was an approach, not an attack. Unlike the Khedive's move, it was actually invited by Barghash and it was a necessary part of its purpose to safeguard, not to disrupt, his dominions. It came, moreover, from that quarter of Europe whence it might have been expected to come. The British, after all, had the oldest commercial and consular connexion with Zanzibar of any Europeans. Their influence with the Sultan was admittedly dominant. If foreigners were now going to take a closer interest in his dominions, were not they the likeliest to do so?

So far, however, British interest in East Africa had been mainly philanthropic. In the development of trade, British merchants had only played a minor part. Their business, like that of other Europeans or Americans, was far exceeded by British Indian business. Only in the important field of transport and communications, in providing a shipping service and in laying a telegraph cable, had they taken or were about to take the lead. Nor had their business, such as it was, been in any way linked with politics. British Governments had left British merchants in East Africa, as in most other quarters of the world, severely alone; and no attempt had been made to use them or their fellow pioneers, the missionaries, as the instruments of political designs.<sup>1</sup> Official British policy from first to last had been negative; its sole political aim to maintain the integrity of the Zanzibar dominions.

<sup>1</sup> There were, of course, some politically minded missionaries, but they were in no sense Government agents.



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Proposals, it is true, had been made from time to time, but never by a British Government, for the occupation of East African territory. Owen in 1824 had actually accepted a provisional protectorate of Mombasa and a large strip of the coast, pending a decision by the Cabinet; and the British flag had flown over Fort Jesus for more than two years before it was hauled down.<sup>1</sup> Buxton had revived the idea of occupying Mombasa in 1838, but Palmerston had brusquely rejected it.<sup>2</sup> The British explorers in the 'fifties had talked of British rule in the interior, but nobody, it seemed, had listened.<sup>3</sup> Witnesses before the Committee of 1870 had suggested the purchase from the Sultan of a port—Mombasa again was the favourite—without evoking anything but the coldest official response.<sup>4</sup> If it is significant that none of these proposals were welcomed by the British Government or Parliament, it is still more significant that none of them were prompted by the desire for territorial aggrandisement or economic advantage. The only motive of them all was to strengthen British efforts to suppress the Slave Trade.

Such was the British record up to 1876; but with the Egyptian invasion there came a slight but noticeable change. Ismail and Gordon had between them underlined, as it were, the economic and strategic importance of East Africa—the potential value, on the one hand, of the natural resources of the equatorial region; the difficulty, on the other hand, of stopping the Nilotic Slave Trade; and the desirability, in both respects, of opening up communications between the Great Lakes and the Indian Ocean. The actual attempt to annex a portion of the coast, inspired as it had been in Gordon's mind at any rate by humanitarian considerations, was a challenge to the efficiency of British methods of repressing the Slave Trade; and Kirk, it will be remembered, had met it by a frank admission that the complete abolition of the Trade could best be brought about by the British occupation of a port. Economic interest was similarly stimulated by the invasion. In the spring of 1877, in a letter to Wylde, Kirk gave an ironical description of the swarm of British concession hunters then buzzing round the Sultan.

'Barghash has plenty of schemes before him. John Pender<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *East Africa and its Invaders*, chap. viii.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 287–8.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 131, above.

<sup>4</sup> See pp. 167–9, above.

<sup>5</sup> Sir John Pender of the Eastern Telegraph Company: see p. 323, below.

offers him a telegraph. The *Daily Telegraph* people wish a cession of the island of Mafia. The Church Mission people wish a similar concession of Saadani and the ivory trade. Some Scotch people wish a road to Nyasa, others the whole coast from Kilwa to Delgado. No one has offered for the Somali coast; but if I were in business, I should look north rather than south, for there the climate is such as white men can live in, whereas Kilwa and that coast is a pestiferous place.<sup>1</sup>

Those were 'small fry', and it was another matter when William Mackinnon entered the lists. Born in Argyllshire in 1823, he had gone out to India in 1847 to join an old school-fellow engaged in the coasting trade; and to his energy and enterprise the creation of the 'B.I.' Company<sup>2</sup> had been mainly due. In every important port in the Indian Ocean and beyond it in Burma, the East Indies and Australia his ships were soon well known. When Frere as Governor of Bombay appointed Pelly to the Residency in the Persian Gulf in 1862, 'Look out', he told him, 'for a little Scotsman called Mackinnon. You will find him the mainspring of all the British enterprise there.'<sup>3</sup> It was as true at Zanzibar as at Bushire. Mackinnon was mainly responsible for the first steamship service and regular mail, and he was connected with the provision of a telegraph cable. And it was Mackinnon who first conceived a scheme for the organised economic penetration and development of the interior. He found a warm supporter in Kirk and another in Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton who had inherited his famous father's interest in the humanitarian movement and believed, as he had done, in the policy of enlisting commerce in the campaign against the Slave Trade. The first move was projected in 1876. Mackinnon and Buxton agreed to finance the building of a road from the coast to the northern end of Lake Nyasa, 'the object being', in Kirk's words, 'to open the Nyasa country to legitimate trade and so assist in replacing that in slaves.' On Kirk's advice Dares-Salaam was chosen for the starting point, and by midsummer of 1877 six miles of good road had been completed. As many as a hundred natives a day were using it, reported Kirk, to bring

<sup>1</sup> K. to W., 6. iv. 77: private correspondence.

<sup>2</sup> Founded as 'The Calcutta and Burmah Steam Navigation Co.' in 1856: renamed 'British India Steam Navigation Co.' in 1862.

<sup>3</sup> *D.N.B.*, first supplement, iii. 127.

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their rice, india-rubber and gum copal to Dar-es-Salaam.<sup>1</sup> It was a costly business, and a questioner in the House of Commons had asked if the Government would help to pay for it. The answer was in the negative,<sup>2</sup> and Mackinnon and Buxton had to carry on unaided. Four years later, when Kirk inspected the road in person, he found it seventy-three miles long, well-constructed, and costing little for upkeep. Its makers, he wrote, 'must be congratulated on the benefit conferred by them on the country'. 'As a philanthropic undertaking it has been eminently successful, and its civilising influence upon the people through whose country it passes is very apparent. It has as yet, however, reached no highway of commerce, and the local trade, though fast increasing, is small. Unfortunately the presence of the tse-tse fly after the first forty miles from the coast makes it hopeless to attempt the use of horses or bullocks. . . . The Zaramu, who have been brought under the influence of the road, are one of the most degraded and troublesome tribes on the coast, and until the country had been opened up it was unsafe for any but an armed party to pass. . . . Now anyone may traverse the country unarmed. . . . I noticed that along many miles [the natives] had formed extensive fields in the adjacent lands and had commenced to settle in open and cleared spaces, leaving their stockaded villages in the jungle.'<sup>3</sup>

Kirk feared, however, that the road would never be a great trade route to Lake Nyasa. Farther inland it would have to cross a poor and thinly peopled area and then climb the plateau and the mountain barrier that girdled the north-east corner of the lake. The trade of the Nyasa country, he truly prophesied, would find its exit to the sea in course of time by the Shiré and Zambesi valleys. The new road might, on the other hand, attract the trade of Unyamwezi and its *hinterland* away from the old familiar route owing to the great advantage of the 'magnificent port of shipment' at Dar-es-Salaam over the 'dangerous open roadstead' at Bagamoyo. This would already have happened, Kirk affirmed, if Seyyid Majid had lived longer;<sup>4</sup> but

<sup>1</sup> K. to Derby, 26. vii. 77: K.P. VIa, 155.

<sup>2</sup> H. of C., 15. ii. 77. *Hansard*, ccxxxii. 391.

<sup>3</sup> K. to Granville, 28. ii. 81: K.P. VIII. 221.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 221. For Majid's idea of Dar-es-Salaam as a place of refuge, see pp. 36-7, above.

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Majid's project of building a new capital at Dar-es-Salaam had died with its author. When Elton went there in 1873, he found that 'time, neglect and weather' had already destroyed most of what Majid had done. 'The boldly designed main streets are choked up with rank grasses and brushwood; the houses for the most part deserted and locked up or giving way to decay, except at one enterprising corner where a few Indians industriously strive to revive a failing trade with the interior.'<sup>1</sup> But the 'Mackinnon Road' came just in time to save the whole site from reverting to the jungle. The town was cleaned up and grew with its growing trade. In 1886 its population was reckoned at 5,000.<sup>2</sup>

### 2

Meantime a far more ambitious plan for the exploitation of the interior had been conceived; but this time the initiative was the Sultan's, not Mackinnon's. Barghash, naturally enough, had been the first to take to heart the lesson of the Egyptian invasion. He discerned, quite as clearly as Kirk, the new forces that were now converging on East Africa. He knew that his control of the mainland trade was in danger. He knew also that the idea of 'opening up', of 'civilising', of 'developing' the interior had not sprung from Ismail's imagination. Those phrases had for some time past been common parlance among European philanthropists, scientists and business men. And he was well aware that the work to be done in East Africa, as they conceived it, was quite beyond his powers. Whether its primary objective was the complete extinction of the Slave Trade in the region of the Great Lakes or a fuller knowledge of the inland country and its inhabitants and resources or an increase in the volume of African produce coming out and of European goods going in—it all needed far more money and more men than Zanzibar could provide; money to finance the building of railways, roads, quays, forts and offices, men to do a thousand things the Arabs

<sup>1</sup> Elton, 75.

<sup>2</sup> Notes of the Delimitation Commission, enclosed in Kitchener to Rosebery, 15. iii. 86: K.P. XI, pt. v, 19. Mr. John W. Moir, the well-known pioneer of British enterprise in Nyasaland (see F. L. M. Moir, *After Livingstone*, London, n.d.), now living in Edinburgh, has recently stated that, prior to 1878, he and his brother 'did a year's roadmaking from Dar-es-Salaam as volunteers under Sir Fowell Buxton': *Glasgow Herald*, 27. ii. 39.

could not do, men capable not only of organising and controlling the whole vast economic experiment but also of dealing with the African tribes, of keeping the peace among them, in some sense indeed—it was no use blinking it—of governing them. What, then, was Barghash to do? If he called European capital and enterprise to his aid, he would profit financially, all going well, from the increase in his duties in the mainland trade, and he would profit politically by the establishment of effective control in the interior. The financial and commercial interests he enlisted in his service would be mobilised to prevent any more attempts like Ismail's to question his authority and violate the integrity of his dominions. But there was an obvious risk. His servants might become his masters. Those European pioneers might prove to be more than philanthropists and business men. They might be converted into instruments of national aggrandisement; and, once they had got a firm grip on the interior in the Sultan's name, they might coolly hand it over to their Government. On the other hand, there was, perhaps, a greater risk in doing nothing. Interested Europeans would be able to assert that the 'civilisation' of Central Africa was a duty to its peoples, and that, if the Sultan was unable to discharge it, one or other of the European Governments, not to mention the Egyptian, was quite ready to endure any sacrifice it might entail. Kirk's main argument, it will be recalled, against the Egyptian claims had been that Barghash was in a better position than Ismail to achieve the ostensible ultimate object of McKillop's expedition—the suppression of the Slave Trade. But that plea would not avail to meet the far wider demand for the 'opening up' of all East Africa.

It was a momentous choice, but Barghash soon made it. Not long after the withdrawal of the Egyptian invaders he informed Lord Derby that he desired British 'capitalists' to assist him in 'the development and civilisation of Africa and the opening up of trade on the coast and in the interior'.<sup>1</sup> Derby conveyed the

<sup>1</sup> Barghash's original letter to Derby has not been traced. It is cited in Waller's instructions (about to be mentioned) and in Kirk's dispatch to Derby, reporting Waller's arrival at Zanzibar. Derby did not question its authenticity which, indeed, there is no reason to doubt. But the precise date cannot be fixed. If allowance is made for the working out of a scheme before Waller was sent to Zanzibar in March 1877, it was probably some time in the summer of 1876.

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message to Mackinnon who was then engaged with Buxton in preparations for beginning their road. They were both in a responsive mood, and in the winter of 1876-7, as has been seen, they and their associates had so far made up their minds as to ask for Gordon's advice and assistance. A few weeks later their scheme was ready. On April 4, 1877, Gerald Waller, brother of Horace, Livingstone's friend and colleague, arrived at Zanzibar with a draft of a concession in his pocket and with authority to negotiate on behalf of a group of 'influential gentlemen', headed by Mackinnon and Buxton.

'A leading object of the association represented by us [ran his instructions] would be to occupy the territory between the coast and Lake Victoria Nyanza in His Highness' name, so as to prevent the Egyptian Government, which would neither respect H.H.'s sovereignty nor the liberties of the native populations, from extending its baneful influence in that direction. His Highness not having the means of occupying and developing his continental possessions now lying waste and unprotected and offering to the Egyptians who are rapidly extending southwards a strong temptation to come and occupy them, the proposal you have to submit will present to H.H. an opportunity of vigorously accomplishing this without any cost to his government: and should H.H. think fit to grant the concessions, the concessionnaires will immediately seek from Her Majesty's Government the recognition of H.H.'s territorial rights and an approval of the steps they intend to take, both of which they have good reasons for believing will be cordially granted. On your arrival at Zanzibar you will please to put yourself in confidential communication with Dr. Kirk and be guided by him as to the mode you should adopt in approaching H.H. on the subject of these concessions and in all other matters relating to this important proposal.'<sup>1</sup>

It was indeed important. The terms of the draft concession went far beyond any previous suggestions for European intervention on the mainland. It was no longer a question of occupying a port or two. Mackinnon and his friends were asking for nothing less than the economic and political control of the whole of the Sultan's territories on the mainland. The first 'proposition' of the draft concession ran as follows:

'His Highness the Sultan of Zanzibar authorises the Con-

<sup>1</sup> MS. copy of instructions, 8. iii. 77, bound up in K.P. VIa.

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cessionnaires or their representatives to found . . . one or more Societies with the object of undertaking and executing throughout the whole of His Highness' dominions the works of public utility which form the subject of this Concession.<sup>1</sup>

The second 'proposition' went a great deal farther.

'His Highness authorises the Concessionnaires or their representatives (1) to appoint, in his name and on his behalf, Commissioners to rule any districts in His Highness' possessions except as hereinafter provided: (2) to appoint such subordinate officers and officers of justice as may be required: (3) to pass laws for the government of the districts: (4) to raise an armed force for the protection of the districts, such force to be regarded as in the service of His Highness, but to be entirely under the control of the Concessionnaires or their representatives: (5) to make Treaties with neighbouring Governments or with subordinate or other native Chiefs: (6) to acquire and to regulate the disposal of all land not yet occupied: (7) to levy and collect such local or other taxes as may be necessary for the maintenance and support of such local Governments, forces, administration of justice, improvement of roads or water communication or other public works, defensive or otherwise, and for the liquidation of debts and payment of interest on capital expended.'

There is no ambiguity there, no half-measures, no division of authority. The Company is to exercise all the powers of a colonial government. Its Commissioners, aided by administrative, judicial, financial and technical 'services', are to rule in the fullest sense—making and executing the law, raising and using an army, controlling the vital matter of land ownership and tenure, raising and spending revenue, even exercising the treaty power—and to rule the whole of the Sultan's mainland realm, since it is only Zanzibar and Pemba that are exempted by the last clause of the Concession from its scope.

The rest of the document deals in detail with the economic and financial side of the matter. The Concessionnaires are to have the *exclusive* right (1) to regulate the navigation of rivers and lakes and the construction of roads, railways and telegraphs; (2) to prospect for and exploit all deposits of minerals, precious stones or mineral oils; (3) to issue notes and coinage in the Sultan's name from such bank or banks as they may establish; and

<sup>1</sup> The full text of the Concession is given in K.P. VIa, 88–90.

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(4) to control or prevent the importation of arms, ammunition and intoxicating liquors. They may occupy a port or ports on any part of the coast and levy harbour dues thereat. They may use all forest trees or other woods for public works or trade. And, last but by no means least, they are to obtain the *régie* or lease of the customs at Zanzibar and all other ports at the expiration of the existing lease held by an Indian firm and to hold it for sixty-six years—the present rate of duties being maintained unless the Sultan should vary it with the Concessionnaires' consent.<sup>1</sup> The rest of the Concession was to hold good for seventy years.

So much for the Company's share of the bargain. The Sultan for his part was to obtain (1) one 'founder's share', entitling him to 20 per cent. of the nett profits of the Company after interest at 8 per cent. had been paid to the shareholders; (2) the same amount of customs revenue as he was receiving under the existing lease and one-half of any future increase in the yield at Zanzibar and one-quarter at other ports; (3) a royalty not exceeding 5 per cent. on the profits of exploiting minerals.

Waller, as instructed, at once got into touch with Kirk and showed him the draft Concession, a copy of which Kirk duly forwarded to the Foreign Office together with his comments. Of these the more important were the following: (1) A clause must be inserted reserving the treaty rights of foreigners which would be infringed by the provisions for taxation and the administration of justice. (2) The proposed exclusive control of river navigation would violate all the treaties, and only the treaties with the United States and France restricted the importation of arms. (3) All the treaties forbade the imposition of harbour dues. But, if these mistakes, which were obviously due to ignorance of the treaties, were rectified, Kirk evidently approved of the proposals, drastic as they were. 'The terms offered are clearly in favour of the Sultan who has apparently all to gain and nothing to lose except his personal control and the exercise of powers requiring a supervision which at present absorbs his income and gives him nothing but incessant trouble and annoyance.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The firm was that of the famous Indian business man, Taria Topan whose five-year lease had begun to run on August 20, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> K.'s memorandum on the Draft Concession, enclosed in K. to D., 10. iv. 77: K.P. VIa, 90.



In his accompanying dispatch Kirk emphasised again this reason—it was the only one he gave—for welcoming the project. ‘Should His Highness decide to waive his personal rule on the mainland in favour of such an organisation as that now under consideration, Zanzibar might very soon be made a prosperous and powerful kingdom, the Slave Trade totally suppressed, and works of public utility carried into distant parts of the continent. At present the extended coast districts of Zanzibar, from which almost the whole profits now are derived, are a constant source of outlay and difficulty to His Highness. Left, however, with only the two islands to administer and watch over, with the same revenue at his disposal as at present, but free of the drain which takes so much away, he would be able to attend to local wants and be encouraged and forced by the advances that would be taking place on the mainland to keep pace in some measure with the times. On the other hand it is impossible to foretell how far a gigantic scheme such as the present may lead when once the Company has at its disposal a trained military force and virtually rules a rich country of such extent.’<sup>1</sup>

Barghash, like Waller, had at once sought Kirk’s advice. Since the proposals were the direct outcome of his suggestion to Derby, he assumed, no doubt, that in principle at any rate the Foreign Office had no objection to them; but from the outset Kirk was ‘very careful not to allow His Highness to imagine that the offer now made to him comes in any way from or through the British Government’. In discussing the matter and advising on it Kirk told Barghash that he was acting officially ‘only in so far as the rights of British subjects generally, in opposition to those of a Company, may be involved’.<sup>2</sup> Kirk was also careful to make sure that Barghash fully understood what the draft Concession meant. Was he willing, he asked him, to delegate all personal authority in his mainland dominions to a Company whose conduct he would be unable to control? It was ‘not without some surprise’, Kirk reported, that he heard Barghash’s unhesitating answer. He would grant the Concession if he were assured that the plans it contained for developing the resources of the mainland were to be carried out. ‘If this were done, he would not allow feelings of a personal nature, although involv-

<sup>1</sup> K. to D., 10. iv. 77: K.P. VIa, 87–8.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

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ing a considerable sacrifice of apparent dignity at the time, to come between him and the good of his people or stand in the way of carrying out at an early date works that would change the face of Africa and raise this country from its present [state of] insignificance into one of importance.'<sup>1</sup>

Nor did Barghash raise serious difficulties on matters of detail. He shrewdly pointed out that, when the mainland was opened up, most of the trade would pass directly in and out of the coast ports and no longer through Zanzibar, so that his share of the customs revenue should be the same throughout his dominions. He also hinted that taxes should not be levied by the Company on his 'subjects', *i.e.* the inhabitants of the maritime belt as distinct from the tribes inland, without his receiving some compensation. Judges, again, on the coast, administering Moslem law, would have to be Moslems. The Sultan, finally, might need a loan from the Company, preferably free of interest.<sup>2</sup>

At the beginning of May Kirk received instructions from the Foreign Office to give Waller 'all proper assistance of which he may stand in need and to introduce him to the Sultan with a view to his obtaining from His Highness such facilities as he may be disposed to grant in furtherance of the objects' of his mission. On May 3, accordingly, Waller, who had hitherto dealt with intermediaries, was presented by Kirk to the Sultan, and a general discussion of the draft Concession ensued. It was agreed that some trustworthy person should attend the last stage of the negotiations who could speak Arabic for the purpose of close consultation with the Sultan. Could not Kirk be the man? asked Barghash; and Kirk was obliged to explain once more his aloof official status in the matter. 'The Company have nothing to do with the British Government.' Barghash's next choice was Badger. Kirk fully concurred, and the Sultan's personal reply to the proposals took the form of an Arabic letter to Badger in which he was asked to come to Zanzibar and 'assist at the final adjustment of the negotiations'.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> K. to D., 16. iv. 77: K.P. VIa, 107.

<sup>2</sup> MS. copy of Barghash's memorandum, 20. iv. 77, bound up in K.P. VI.

<sup>3</sup> K. to D., 25. iv. and 5. v. 77: K.P. VIa, 112, 119.

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The scene now shifts to London. On Waller's return and in the light of his report Mackinnon and his associates prepared a second draft of the Concession. The main amendment was the addition, where required, of a proviso 'saving the treaty rights of other nations'. The appointment of judges by the Company was to be subject to the Sultan's approval. The right to raise an armed force was now not specifically mentioned, but presumably it was covered by a new sentence which required the Sultan to cede to the Company 'all the rights which he himself possesses over the lands in the whole of his territory on the mainland of Africa'. The exclusive right to trade in ivory was added to the other monopolies. As to the customs revenue Barghash's claim was conceded. He was to have half of any increase in the duties collected at *all* his ports. He was now safeguarded, moreover, against a fall by a guarantee to pay him not less than the amount he was receiving yearly from the present customs-farmers, viz. 450,000 dollars (about £100,000). A loan, free of interest, up to £50,000 was to be made to the Sultan if he desired it, to be repaid in four annual instalments.<sup>1</sup>

The Foreign Office, meantime, had obtained the opinion of the India Office on the scheme as a whole. Pressed for a speedy answer, Lord Salisbury, then Secretary of State for India, had refused to commit himself until he had consulted the Government of India; and it was not till November 1877 that he was able to submit to Lord Derby, with his personal confirmation, the dispatch he had received from Lord Lytton, the Viceroy, and his Council.

'We have carefully considered [it ran] the documents forwarded, and, though the project in question is one chiefly affecting Imperial interests, still we are of opinion that its accomplishment would benefit rather than injure those of India. The careful views expressed by Dr. Kirk have our general concurrence. We specially approve those urged by him in the last two paragraphs of his letter of the 25th April to the Earl of Derby, showing how extremely important it is that the scheme should be carried out while British influence remains paramount and before rival and possibly antagonistic powers find opportunities

<sup>1</sup> Text of second draft, enclosed in F.O. to K., 26. ii. 78: K.P. VIb, 312.

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to thwart it. With reference, however, to the powers asked for by the projectors for making peace or war and for acquiring fresh territory, we are of opinion that such powers should be granted only after full consideration and should be closely guarded.<sup>1</sup>

Thus fortified, Derby was ready with a favourable response when at the end of the year Mackinnon submitted to him the second draft of the Concession as he had the first.

‘I am directed by the Earl of Derby [wrote Sir Julian Pauncefote] to acknowledge the receipt of your letter. . . . I am to state to you in reply that this scheme is one which it is competent to you and to the parties associated with you to carry into effect without the sanction of Her Majesty’s Government, but that, as it seems calculated to render considerable aid in the suppression of the Slave Trade and to develop the resources of that part of Africa which is to be the scene of your contemplated operations, it commends itself to such support as Her Majesty’s Government can properly afford to such an undertaking. I am to add, however, that they would not feel justified in giving to it a formal sanction, and they must reserve to themselves the right of free action in the event of complications arising which might imperil the good relations of this country with foreign Powers.’<sup>2</sup>

A guarded statement, but not unnaturally or unduly guarded. Why should ‘formal sanction’ be given if it were not needed? And, though it was doubtless wise, almost indeed a matter of course, to enter a *caveat* as to the possibility of reactions on foreign Powers, it was highly improbable that any serious tension would arise. So far as was known, the only European Government which concerned itself with East Africa at that time was the French Government; and, while their treaty rights on the coast were explicitly safeguarded, they had no rights at all in the interior. King Leopold of Belgium had just begun, as will presently be seen, to take an interest in East Africa, but it was ostensibly a purely scientific interest. Mackinnon at any rate recognised that he had got all the support he could expect

<sup>1</sup> F.O. to I.O., 23. vi. 77; F.O. to I.O., 5. xii. 77: India Office, *Home Correspondence, Political and Secret Department*, vol. 19/101. F.O. to I.O., 29. viii. 77; I.O. to F.O., 13. ix. 77: *ibid.*, vol. 21/103. Govt. of India to Salisbury, 11. x. 77: *Letters from India, P. and S.D.*, Sept. to Dec. ’77, vol. 16/54: I.O. to F.O., 22. xi. 77: *Home Correspondence, P. and S.D.*, vol. 22/104.

<sup>2</sup> K. to D., 17. xii. 77; P. to M., 19. xii. 77; enclosed in P. to K., 26. ii. 78: K.P. VIb, 312, 316. Pauncefote was then legal under-secretary at the F.O.

from the Foreign Office, and he was quite content. In his reply to Pauncefote, he was 'pleased to observe', he wrote, that, though, for the reasons stated, formal sanction could not be given to his project, the Government approved of it and would give it such support as it properly could. 'Under these circumstances', he concluded, 'I shall at once take the necessary steps to get the Concession ratified.'<sup>1</sup>

Waller and Badger arrived at Zanzibar on April 29, 1878. Waller's instructions for this second visit were on the same lines as those for the first. He was to follow Kirk's advice 'in regard to everything connected with the Concession', and he was empowered, after consultation with Kirk, to settle any subsidiary points on his own authority; but his acceptance of amendments in the draft affecting its main purposes must be subject to confirmation. That Mackinnon took a settlement almost for granted and was already making plans for acting on it is clear from the last paragraph of the instructions. 'Assuming that the Concession will be duly signed, we shall probably proceed first to occupy a post near the northern limit of H.H.'s territory, and begin a movement thence inwards towards Lake Victoria Nyanza, and next a post at or near the mouth of the Ozi or Tana River from which we shall also move inland in the direction of the same lake; and at the same time, with the assistance of H.H., we shall aim at sending a small armed steamer to Lake Tanganyika.'<sup>2</sup>

Badger was equally confident. He had promptly accepted the Sultan's invitation to act as his adviser. He regarded the terms of the draft Concession as 'eminently fair' and believed the concessionnaires to be actuated by 'philanthropic rather than mercenary motives'. 'It is my conviction', he had written to the Foreign Office, 'that under such management as that of the proposed Company the Zanzibar Empire seventy years hence will be as different from the Zanzibar of the present day as the New Zealand of 1877 from what it was half a century ago.'<sup>3</sup> Kirk, finally, expected a quick and happy outcome. Barghash had again 'discussed the whole question confidentially' with him. Many points would still need careful consideration, he reported

<sup>1</sup> M. to P., 22. ii. 78: copy bound up in K.P. VI.

<sup>2</sup> M. to W., 3. v. 78: duplicate with M.'s signature, bound up in K.P. VI.

<sup>3</sup> B. to F.O., 27. ix. 77: copy enclosed in M. to W. cited in last note.

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to Derby, but the Sultan 'has in no manner changed his views' since the project was first advanced.<sup>1</sup> Writing privately to Wylde, Kirk said he had had 'a long and interesting conversation' with Barghash and was glad to find him adhering firmly to the first draft at any rate of the Concession. 'You know it was then a good sound concession and one I should just like to have the financing of myself. The Sultan would have signed it a year ago, had I asked him, and he would to-day.'<sup>2</sup>

Thus the last stage of the negotiations opened in the most favourable atmosphere; but it was soon evident that they were not to proceed so smoothly and swiftly to their conclusion as had been expected. The second draft, it appeared, was less to Barghash's liking than the first. Nevertheless, the amendments he proposed were not by any means 'wrecking' amendments. The Company was to require his sanction for the sale of land and the levy of taxes. The 'settled districts' on the coast were not to be subjected to new imposts apart from taxes. The Company's monopoly of the ivory trade was not to affect the Sultan's subjects. The Sultan was to retain his present exclusive right to trade in the Mrima in gum copal, india-rubber and rhinoceros horn, and the duties on those articles were not to be increased. The existing forts and fortifications on the mainland were to remain in the Sultan's hands. The Company was to occupy the coast, district by district, within three years and the interior 'as speedily as practicable', having first taken over the control of the customs. The Sultan should obtain further loans, free of interest, from the Company, if he needed them, provided the previous loan had been repaid. Lastly, any dispute between the parties to the Concession should be referred to arbitration by the British consul-general.<sup>3</sup>

Some of these demands were awkward—the Sultan's retention of the forts, for instance, and of his own little monopoly, and the admission of the Arabs to the ivory trade. But they could not in themselves create a deadlock. If Barghash still genuinely desired the Concession, he might well be putting these claims forward in the expectation that the Company would either

<sup>1</sup> K. to D., 1. v. 78: K.P. VIb, 376.

<sup>2</sup> K. to W., 3. v. 78: private correspondence.

<sup>3</sup> Translation (by Badger) of the Sultan's draft, 30. v. 78. enclosed in K. to Salisbury, 31. v. 78: K.P. VIb, 400.

accept them or buy him out. From the Company's standpoint, likewise, such minor claims could not be allowed to bar the execution of their great design. Yet, as the days went by, the negotiations grew more and more 'sticky'. Before the month of May was up, they were broken off. At the beginning of June, Waller and Badger sailed for home.<sup>1</sup>

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What had happened? Kirk, who knew everything that passed, supplies the answer. The main difficulty, it seems, was a question of time. A year had already gone by since the first broaching of the project, and Mackinnon and his associates were still not ready to take over the control of the mainland for some time. Leading Arabs were now aware of the scheme and protesting against it. Their opposition could be overcome by rapid action; but the longer the delay, the harder it would be to carry through the transfer of control without serious friction. Other interested parties—Kirk does not say if they were Arabs—'impressed His Highness with the great natural resources of his dominions in order to convince him that his pecuniary prospects were equally good or better under the present *régime*'. Subjected to these influences, Barghash began to waver even with regard to the main principles of the scheme; but Kirk was sure that he would have recovered all his original faith in it if only the whole operation could have been put through quickly. Writing to Horace Waller, he said he had told Mackinnon that his brother had done all he could. 'The fatal mistake has been the delay and the Company not being able at once to take over the government.'<sup>2</sup>

There was also, as so often in affairs of the kind, an unfortunate personal factor. It betrayed itself at the very outset of the negotiations, and in view of Barghash's pride and temper it may

<sup>1</sup> K. to S., 31. v. 78: K.P. VIb, 399.

<sup>2</sup> K. to S., 31. v. 78: K.P. VIb, 399. K. to H. W., 31. v. 78: private correspondence. In another letter Kirk gives an interesting reason for Mackinnon having lost some of his influence at Zanzibar. 'What has personally injured Mackinnon is the drunken set of men who have come as artificers. . . . [presumably to work on the road]. . . . The Sultan has had a deal of trouble with these men. It will inevitably end in all *employés* here being Germans. They work for half what the same quality of Englishman will and are sober. . . . Germans, too, are good linguists: we seldom are.' K. to H. W., 14. xi. 78: private correspondence.

well have been the chief reason for their eventual breakdown. The following account of it is given by Kirk in a private letter to Wylde, dated May 3.

'If the matter falls through it will be Badger's fault. . . . He has had his usual blow off and threatened, if the Sultan does not agree at once, to go back by this mail. I told the Sultan to take it easy and recollect that he has witnessed scenes with old Badger before. . . . Of course the Concessions can easily be spoiled, and Badger is a fool to trust to his power and run any risk. He is the most undiplomatic man I ever knew. The way to deal with the Sultan is to approach him on the old draft, point out that some expressions there are dangerous to him, get him to initiate the changes and so carry him with you. Badger has taken another course. He ignores the old [draft] . . . and rams the [new one] down the Sultan's throat. . . .

'Since writing the above I have been interrupted and Waller has called to say that Badger is in a rage with the Sultan, Mackinnon, everyone. He is making an ass of himself: he thinks his dignity touched because the Sultan is not such a fool as to agree to a set of concessions because he (Badger) translated them into Arabic. He has sent, I am told, the most insolent messages and written the Sultan a bullying letter—told him, "When I came in your brother's time, he received me well and all went well. When I came in 1873, you treated *me* badly and would not take my advice and so I left, but that was the signal for eight men of war to come. Now you do not take my advice and I shall go, but this time do not be afraid: no men of war will follow my departure this time, no, but you will lose my friendship, and that will be more serious far." . . .'<sup>1</sup>

Kirk's comment is characteristically restrained. 'The man's head seems turned.' But it is curious to reflect that the destiny of East Africa at this crisis may possibly have been determined by an elderly Arabist's stupidity.

Whatever the cause and whoever to blame, that breakdown in the spring of 1878 was in fact the end of the whole business. There was no formal rupture. Before Waller left Zanzibar, indeed, Barghash gave him for submission to Mackinnon a version of the Concession in which he had incorporated the amend-

<sup>1</sup> K. to W., 3. v. 78: private correspondence.



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ments he had proposed in the course of the negotiations.<sup>1</sup> A few weeks later, however, he added a new article—and this time, perhaps, he meant it to wreck the scheme—requiring the Company to take over the customs and the mainland by January 1, 1879.<sup>2</sup> But even so the Concession might still perhaps have been obtained if its promoters had used all their influence in London and spent all the money they could spare at Zanzibar. But it was Mackinnon now who hesitated. He evidently wanted the Concession to be signed in May. But he seems to have done nothing more about it when Waller and Badger got home in July; and Kirk at any rate had no doubt that the final collapse of the 'gigantic' plan was due to 'the little Scotsman's' half-heartedness. 'Mackinnon never was hot enough on it,' he wrote to Horace Waller in the following November. And nobody but Mackinnon could have saved the situation. 'I don't see any way of getting the Concession reopened at present. I cannot do it myself as it would compromise me altogether to enter as an active agent of a commercial concern.' 'I am thankful', he adds by way of good-bye to the scheme, 'it never came on in a small scale. Either a real government or none at all.'<sup>3</sup>

It is only fair to remember, and it is no discredit to Mackinnon, that his interest in the scheme was primarily a business man's interest. 'I am glad you agree with me', wrote Kirk, and again it is for Waller's eyes alone, 'that schemes for the good of Africa must be financially successful to the promoters. I am sick and tired of the cant everyone tells me of Mackinnon's disinterestedness. Bosh!'<sup>4</sup> Perhaps, then, when Mackinnon and his associates in the City realised the huge scale of the projected enterprise—as late as March 1878 Kirk believed they had not yet done so—they began to ponder anew the immense financial risk it entailed till presently they found they could not face it.

Not long afterwards a tradition was established that the breakdown of the negotiations had been entirely the British Government's fault. Writing to Lord Salisbury in 1885, the President of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, Mr. J. F.

<sup>1</sup> Translation enclosed in K. to S., 31. v. 78: K.P. VIb, 400.

<sup>2</sup> Postscript to printed copy of the Sultan's draft (1. vi. 78), with manuscript additions, bound up in K.P. VIb.

<sup>3</sup> K. to H. W., 14. xi. 78: private correspondence.

<sup>4</sup> K. to H. W., 5. iii. 17. x. and 14. xi. 78: private correspondence.

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Hutton, declared that 'the proposals failed through delay in the Foreign Office'.<sup>1</sup> A few years later it was worse than delay: it was antagonism. So said the newspapers in chorus when Mackinnon died in 1893.<sup>2</sup> So, too, said P. L. McDermott who at Mackinnon's 'express desire' compiled the official history of the British East Africa Company. 'Sir William Mackinnon', he wrote, 'declined to proceed with the negotiations on finding that he could not obtain from the Foreign Office the support he deemed necessary.'<sup>3</sup> So, lastly, says the *Dictionary of National Biography*: 'The British Government declined to sanction the Concession.' But, if that were true, it is strange that not one word of it appears in the Foreign Office records of the time. Could Derby have merely spoken to Mackinnon on this important subject and made no note of what he said? And, having previously instructed Kirk to do what he properly could to assist the negotiations, would he have told him nothing about his change of front? Kirk, too, was in personal touch with all the other parties concerned—Waller, Badger, Mackinnon himself. Surely, if anyone knew all the truth, he did.

When the question of a concession was again discussed at the Foreign Office in 1885, Villiers Lister, assistant under-secretary, made the following curious note: 'There is a secret history of the failure of the former Mackinnon scheme which I will not commit to paper'.<sup>4</sup> That mystery may never be cleared up, but this much is certain—that in 1877–8 a real, an easy chance was offered of bringing all East Africa from Warsheikh to Cape Delgado and from the Great Lakes to the sea under British political and economic control, not against the Sultan's will but at his invitation; and, whether the fault lay mainly in Whitehall or the City, that chance was let slip.

<sup>1</sup> H. to S., 15. vii. 85: K.P. XII, pt. ii, 28.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. *The Times*, *Scotsman* and *Glasgow Herald*, 23. vi. 93, obituary notices.

<sup>3</sup> *British East Africa* (London, first ed. 1893), 3.

<sup>4</sup> Memorandum, 25. iv. 85: F.O., 84. 1737.

# XV

## THE BEGINNING OF THE SCRAMBLE

(1874-1884)

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That familiar phrase, 'the Scramble for Africa', has usually been used to denote the process by which the unoccupied territories of Tropical Africa were hastily appropriated in one form or another by rival European Powers between 1884 and 1891. But in East Africa—and it was much the same in West Africa—a kind of unofficial scramble had begun some years before 1884. From the time of the Egyptian invasion of 1875-6 onwards a multitude of Europeans—explorers, scientists, traders, financiers, missionaries—were scrambling everywhere, at the Sultan's palace in Zanzibar or far inland by the Great Lakes, scrambling for new knowledge, for a reputation, for markets, for concessions, for pagan souls. It was a disorderly business, and it defies orderly description. This chapter must needs be a rather scrambling chapter.

### I

To begin with, the new interest in East Africa had stimulated the old commercial rivalry at Zanzibar, where the volume of trade was rising fast at the time of the Egyptian invasion. Between 1862 and 1872 the average of its annual value had been about £1,000,000. The hurricane of 1872 and the Treaty of 1873, disturbing as it did the system of slave-transport from the interior, had halted or even set back the rise for a time, but in 1875 it was resumed and continued steadily till in 1879 it reached the high figure of £2,200,000.<sup>1</sup> This growth of trade

<sup>1</sup> Holmwood to Hutton, 10. iv. 85: K.P. XII, 34. Since the figures obtained from the 'banyan' customs-officers were unreliable, the usual detailed consular reports were apparently not made up after 1874. This letter of Consul Holmwood's gives the best general account of the later period.

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was naturally reflected in the revenue from customs-duties, so that, whereas in 1869 they had been farmed out for 300,000 dollars (about £65,000) a year, the contract made in 1876 was for 450,000 dollars (about £100,000) and that of 1881 was for 500,000 dollars (about £111,000).<sup>1</sup>

With one exception on the export side, the composition of this trade remained more or less what it had been in Said's reign and Majid's.<sup>2</sup> Of the imports nearly three-sevenths consisted in 1878-9 of cotton goods—cloths, checks, calicoes, 'coloured cottons'. *Merikani* still topped the list with about £95,000 worth, Britain came next with £86,000, and British India third with £67,000. The next biggest import was rice and cereals (£78,000), and then guns and powder (£70,000) of which Belgium provided one-half, Britain two-fifths, and Germany one-tenth. As to exports, the two old favourites, cloves and ivory, were still flourishing. Of a total export worth about £900,000 in 1879, cloves accounted for £170,000 and ivory for £160,000.<sup>3</sup> But both cloves and ivory had now been headed by a newcomer, india-rubber, the rapid development of which in the Kilwa district had been one of the consequences of the measures taken to suppress the Slave Trade between 1873 and 1876.<sup>4</sup> Over 1,000 tons of india-rubber, worth £250 a ton, were exported in 1879.<sup>5</sup> But that was the only new product of importance. A half-hearted attempt was made in 1873 to exploit the possibilities of guano. Schultz, the German consul, asked the Sultan for a concession to his old-established Hamburg firm for

<sup>1</sup> Statement on Customs Contracts from 1820 to 1881: K.P. *misc.* and see p. 71, above.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 78-9, above.

<sup>3</sup> Owing to the effect of the hurricane of 1872 on Zanzibar, Pemba produced nearly all the cloves at this time. In 1877-8, for example, 143,600 *frasilahs* came from Pemba and only 2,500 from Zanzibar (K.'s Journal). But by 1882 the newly planted clove trees had come into bearing with the result that the market was glutted and there was serious distress in Pemba whose clove growers had to pay a special tax from which the Zanzibar growers were exempt: Miles to Granville, 1. ii. 83; K. to G., 13. iii. 84, enclosing report by Lieut. C. S. Smith: K.P. Xa, 112; Xb, 158.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 228, above.

<sup>5</sup> H. to K., 30. i. 80: K.P. VII. 426. The development of this india-rubber trade was mainly Kirk's doing. 'Kirk's attention to a native East African rubber tree was drawn by his seeing a native boy playing with an elastic ball which he found was made of caoutchouc.' W. L. Hooker's memoir, *Kew Bulletin*, 1922, no. 2, 60.

working the guano on Latham, Choquim and Nicorory Islands—three tiny islets southwards of Zanzibar; but he did not press the matter and presently he let it drop.<sup>1</sup> In 1878 coal was thought to have been found in the hills some thirty miles inland from Kilwa,<sup>2</sup> and in 1881 Barghash commissioned the British geologist and explorer, Joseph Thomson, to go and test a similar report from the Rovuma valley.<sup>3</sup> But no real coal nor any other valuable mineral was brought to light in this period on the mainland. So the range of exports from Zanzibar, apart from cloves and ivory and india-rubber, was still rather narrow and unprofitable—£66,000 worth of millet in 1878–9, £60,000 of hides, £45,000 of copra, £43,000 of sesamum, £26,000 of gum copal, £22,000 of orchilla.<sup>4</sup>

The most striking feature in the distribution of this trade, valued, as has been seen, at about £2,200,000, was the great increase in the British share of it. India, mainly British India, still apparently comes first in 1878–9 with imports into Zanzibar at £252,800 and exports at £176,000. Contrary to Kirk's forecast in 1871, light Indian cotton goods had more than recovered their market in the southern part of the coast, even ousting the famous *merikani*. 'The reason for this is', said Holmwood, 'that the climate of those districts is so warm and equable that little clothing is required, and the equally decorative but comparatively flimsy material which the rising manufacturing industry of India is now producing can be sold at little more than half the cost of the heavier and more durable fabrics of Manchester and Massachusetts.' But in the cooler north Lancashire cloth as well as British metal ware and wire was in growing demand.<sup>5</sup> More than half of the Indian imports were in fact only Indian 'in transit': they had come from Britain *via* Bombay. A

<sup>1</sup> The first draft of the proposed concession covered 'all the islands in the Zanzibar dominions' and was otherwise so loosely worded that Kirk advised the Sultan not to grant it as it stood. A pencil note of Kirk's on the printed second draft says: 'In May 1875 H.H. told me he had heard no more of this.' K. to Granville, 29. xi. 73, enclosing draft article of agreement: K.P. IV. 10. For an unsuccessful attempt to exploit the guano on Latham Island in 1845, see *East Africa and its Invaders*, 488–9.

<sup>2</sup> K. to Derby, 19. iii. 78: K.P. VIb, 361.

<sup>3</sup> See next chapter.

<sup>4</sup> Holmwood to Hutton, 10. iv. 85: K.P. XII. 35.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* Trade at Mombasa was increasing fast in 1884; vice-consul Gissing to Kirk, 14. ix. 84: K.P. Xb, 237.

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similar proportion of the exports to India were destined for Britain. Thus British business actually accounted for at least one-third of the imports and more than half of the exports.<sup>1</sup> Its total value may be roughly put at £700,000. Add to that the real Indian trade, amounting roughly to £200,000, and it is clear that British subjects and 'protected persons' taken together had left all other nationals behind. But Germany was not far behind. The imports from Hamburg in 1874 had risen to 760,000 dollars or about £168,000.<sup>2</sup> The United States, on the other hand, had lost ground to Germany, and France had fallen still farther behind the rest.<sup>3</sup>

There was also the carrying trade in which British shipping was still easily predominant, as is shown by the following table of the numbers and tonnage of ships (excluding warships and native craft) calling at Zanzibar.<sup>4</sup>

	1871		1877		1879	
	No.	Tonnage	No.	Tonnage	No.	Tonnage
Britain	- 17	10,459	48	42,487	69	76,265
Germany	- 17	7,467	15	4,653	13	5,940
U.S.A.	- 8	4,250	10	5,352	10	5,283
France	- 11	5,450	4	3,259	4	1,975
	53	27,626	77	55,751	96	89,463

British enterprise was also responsible for communications. A monthly mail service was provided by the B.I. Company, as has been seen, in 1872. It continued to run between Zanzibar and Aden, and for five years from 1874 it held a contract for the French mails from Zanzibar to the Comoro Islands and Majunga. A link with South Africa was provided by the Union Steamship Company till 1881 when the B.I. Company took it over as far as Lourenço Marques.<sup>5</sup> A provisional post-office was esta-

<sup>1</sup> H. to H., as previously cited.

<sup>2</sup> Prideaux's Report for 1874: communicated from the Bombay Archives.

<sup>3</sup> Authoritative statistics are unavailable after 1874. Loose statements to the effect that German trade had far outdistanced British—e.g. M. von Koschitzky who says that in 1875 the value of German imports was thrice that of British (*Deutsche Kolonialgeschichte*, Leipzig, 1887-8, ii. 245)—clearly ignore the 'transit' part of the Indian trade.

<sup>4</sup> *Reports from H.M. Consuls on their Consular Districts*, 1882, part ii. 1162-7. The *Messageries Maritimes* started an East African service in 1885.

<sup>5</sup> *Report on the Zanzibar Postal Service* by J. Robb, acting assistant political agent, enclosed in Miles to P.M.G. Bombay, 23. vii. 82: G.D. 29. 264.

blished at Zanzibar in 1878 and put on a permanent footing in 1880.<sup>1</sup> In 1877 Mr. (later Sir John) Pender, chairman of the Eastern Telegraph Company, informed the Sultan that he was proposing to lay a cable from Aden to Natal and offering to land it at Zanzibar in return for an annual payment of £5,000. Barghash replied that he was 'unfortunately not in a financial position to give the subsidy required', and Kirk pointed out that, as it was agreed that the cable must be landed somewhere on its southward route, it would be in the Company's interest to land it at a commercial centre like Zanzibar.<sup>2</sup> In 1879 the matter was arranged. Pender brought the cable free to Zanzibar, while the Sultan ceded the island of Bawe for a further landing.<sup>3</sup>

The European personnel engaged in all this business was almost entirely concentrated at Zanzibar. A French firm had a branch at Lamu, and a German firm dispatched the unfortunate Heale to Barawa.<sup>4</sup> But, broadly speaking, the management of trade at the coast-towns was left where it had always lain—in Indian hands. Still less did the little commercial coterie at Zanzibar think of attempting at this time to compete with Arab caravans or Indian shopkeepers in the interior. European explorers, scientists, missionaries might take the inland road, but not yet European merchants. A French firm, it is true, started trading at Tabora in 1880, but it failed, as will be seen, to make good,<sup>5</sup> and no other such daring venture is on record. Yet it was on the interior that most business men's eyes were fixed at this early stage of the 'Scramble'. Golden expectations of the wealth to be won somewhere in the teeming heart of Africa had been conjured up by the reports of the first explorers; and the interest taken in the second phase of exploration, which opened in 1874, was quite as much commercial interest as scientific, philanthropic or political. A little more light, and Africa might be found possessing more riches than the East.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> K. to Derby, 11. iv. 77: K.P. VIa, 86.

<sup>3</sup> W. H. Ingrams, *Zanzibar* (London, 1931), 166. O'Swald, 41.

<sup>4</sup> The French explorer, Révoil, found in 1878 that Heale had been succeeded as Messrs. Hansing's agent at Barawa by M. Wolfarth, who had been knocked on the head by a Somali from up-country but had bravely stuck to his post: Révoil's *Voyages* (as cited p. 350, note 2, below), 54.

<sup>5</sup> See p. 349, below.

The lead in the new phase of exploration was taken by Stanley. In the summer of 1874 he was commissioned by the *New York Herald* and the *Daily Telegraph* 'to solve, if possible, the remaining problems of the geography of Central Africa', and in November he started from Bagamoyo with three European subordinates and a caravan 270 strong.<sup>1</sup> In the course of his inland march he lost one of the Europeans, Edward Pocock, from fever, and was attacked by the Nyaturu who killed some twenty of his men but were beaten off by heavy gunfire.<sup>2</sup> In February 1875 he reached the south-east corner of Lake Victoria and proceeded to implement Speke's discovery of it by a circumnavigation of its whole coast. In April he met Mtesa at Rubaga, and while there he was surprised at the arrival of another white man, Gordon's emissary, de Bellefonds. In May he was back at his starting-point where he found that another of the Europeans, Frederick Barker, had died.<sup>3</sup> In July a tragic incident occurred at one of the Bumbire islands off the west coast of the Lake. It must be described in some detail since it made a deep impression on the Africans of the neighbourhood and startled public opinion in England and elsewhere.

According to Stanley's own account, which he sent to the *Daily Telegraph*, he and his party made for the island in quest of food, with guns ready in case of trouble. The natives at first seemed friendly and the visitors were invited to land. As soon as the keel of the boat had grounded it was roughly seized and dragged ashore. Stanley was tempted to shoot at once, but his followers dissuaded him. The islanders then assumed a threatening attitude. 'Spears were held in their hands as if on the launch. Arrows were drawn to the head and pointed at us. . . . I never saw mad rage or cruel fury painted so truly before on human features.' The chief, however, agreed to let his visitors depart if he were suitably rewarded, and he was given some cloth and beads; but then he suddenly ordered the boat's oars to be seized and retired with his people to their village for the mid-day meal. In the course of the afternoon war-drums began to beat, and Stanley received a friendly warning that an attack was immin-

<sup>1</sup> H. M. Stanley, *Through the Dark Continent* (London, 1878), 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 127-9.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, chaps. ix and x.



ent. He managed to launch his boat and, using torn-up floor boards and seats for paddles, to get some distance from the beach before the natives came running down it. 'I discharged my elephant rifle with its two large conical balls into their midst. . . . My double-barrelled shot-gun, loaded with buck-shot, was next discharged with terrible effect. . . . Seeing the sub-chief . . . I took deliberate aim with my elephant rifle at him. That bullet, as I have since been told, killed the chief and two others who happened to be standing a few paces behind him. . . . On getting out of the cove we saw two canoes loaded with men coming out in pursuit from another small inlet. I permitted them to approach within 100 yards of us, and this time I used the elephant rifle with explosive balls. Four shots killed five men and sank the canoes. This decisive affair disheartened the enemy.'<sup>1</sup>

There was worse to come. 'Remembering', wrote Stanley in a second letter, 'the bitter injuries I had received from the savages of Bumbire and the death by violence and starvation we had so narrowly escaped, I resolved, unless the natives made amends for their cruelty and treachery, to make war on them.' He began by demanding the surrender of their chief; and when this was refused, he imprisoned the 'king' and three chiefs of a neighbouring tribe and thus induced their tribesmen to secure the Bumbire chief and hand him over. He was brought to Stanley's camp and 'at once chained heavily'. Stanley then collected a force of 230 spearmen and 50 musketeers, embarked them in eighteen canoes, and set out on his punitive expedition. As he neared the shore, the islanders 'rose from their coverts and ran along the hills to meet us, which was precisely what I wished they would do, and accordingly I ordered my force to paddle slowly so as to give them time. In half an hour the savages were all assembled in knots and groups and after approaching within 100 yards of the beach, I formed my line of battle, the American and English flags waving as our ensigns. Having anchored each canoe so as to turn its broadside to the shore, I ordered a volley to be fired at one group which numbered about fifty, and the result was several killed and many wounded. The savages, perceiving our aim and the danger of standing together, separated themselves and advanced to the water's edge slinging stones and shooting arrows. I then ordered

<sup>1</sup> Letter to *Daily Telegraph*, dated 29. vii. 75, published 7. viii. 76.

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the canoes to advance within fifty yards of the shore and to fire at close quarters. After an hour the savages saw that they could not defend themselves and retreated up the slope where they continued still exposed to our bullets. I then caused the canoes to come together and told them to advance in a body to the beach as if about to disembark. This caused the enemy to make an effort to repulse our landing, and accordingly hundreds came down with their spears ready on the launch. When they were close enough, the bugle sounded a halt, and another volley was poured into the spearmen which had such a disastrous effect that they retired far away, and our work of chastisement was consummated. Not many cartridges were fired, but as the savages were so exposed, on a slope only covered with short grass, and as the sun in the afternoon was directly behind us and in their faces, their loss was great. Forty-two were counted on the field lying dead, and over a hundred were seen to retire wounded, while on our side only two men suffered contusions from stones flung at us.<sup>1</sup>

Stanley's conduct on this occasion may be contrasted with that of other explorers confronted with menacing natives. Grant, for example, fearing an attack as he was marching along that same west coast of Lake Victoria in 1862, ordered his men to load their guns not with explosive bullets but with 'shot-sized pebbles', and even so he was relieved not to have to open fire.<sup>2</sup> Joseph Thomson, as will presently be seen, showed a similar restraint in Urua. But the strangest feature of that grim affair at Bumbire is Stanley's own insensitiveness. In the book in which this expedition was recorded he declared himself 'a strong disciple of the doctrine of forbearance' in dealing with hostile natives—a doctrine which he had learned, he said, from Livingstone: and in the preface to it, 'In the first place,' he observed, 'I have to express my most humble thanks to Divine Providence for the gracious protection vouchsafed to myself and

<sup>1</sup> S. to D. T., 15. viii. 75, printed 10. viii. 76. As these letters were written at the time, they probably represent the facts as Stanley saw them. In his narrative of the expedition, published two years later, Stanley told the same story, but gave an additional reason for his conduct, *viz.* that the Bumbire islanders had attacked and injured a party of natives from Uganda and that he felt bound to punish them for this, owing to his respect for Mtesa and gratitude for his recent hospitality. *Through the Dark Continent*, i. 270-96.

<sup>2</sup> Grant, *op. cit.*, 211.

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my surviving followers during our late perilous labours in Africa.<sup>1</sup> No doubt he was as much chagrined by unfriendly British comments on this affair as he had been by similar comments on one or two incidents of his previous expedition.<sup>2</sup> And certainly they were very unfriendly. On reading the letters in the *Daily Telegraph* the committees of the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Societies submitted a joint protest to the Foreign Office, pointing out that the use of explosive bullets was forbidden in civilised warfare, that the object of Stanley's attack on the island was nothing but revenge, and that, since he had used the British flag, it should be officially stated that he was in no way a representative of Britain.<sup>3</sup> The Rev. J. F. Splaine, S.J., was less restrained. In a letter to the Aborigines Protection Society he asked if Stanley was to go unpunished. 'Ought he not to be sent back under our flag to the village [where the bloodshed had occurred] and there in the presence of the people he has so grossly outraged, hanged with impartial justice as other murderers are?'<sup>4</sup> Another comment came from a fellow explorer. 'Of course you have seen Stanley,' wrote Burton to Kirk, 'who still shoots negroes as if they were monkeys. That young man will be getting into a row—and serve him right. I have, somehow or other, serious doubts how far his assertions are to be believed.'<sup>5</sup>

There was little the British Government could do. Stanley was an American citizen; he was not re-naturalised as a British subject till 1892; and the events he had described had occurred in territory far beyond the scope of any European jurisdiction. But there was one step that could be and clearly had to be taken. On Derby's orders Kirk wrote the following brief note to Stanley. 'I am instructed by the Earl of Derby to convey to you an intimation that you have no authority to make use of the British flag as giving countenance to your proceedings in the interior of Africa.'<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, i. 125 and preface.

<sup>2</sup> To be mentioned in *Livingstone's Last Journey*.

<sup>3</sup> Memorandum to Lord Derby, September 1876: copy enclosed in F.O. to K., 21. xi. 76: K.P. Vb, 572.

<sup>4</sup> J. F. S. to A. P. S., 11. viii. 76, enclosed in F.O. to K. as in preceding footnote.

<sup>5</sup> B. to K., 12. x. 76: K.P. misc.

<sup>6</sup> K. to S., 11. xii. 76: K.P. VIa, 3. Ignorant of Stanley's whereabouts, Kirk asked the American consul to forward this communication. K. to D.,

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Having proved that Lake Victoria was one vast sheet of water, Stanley proceeded to Lake Tanganyika which he also circumnavigated in the summer of 1876. He then struck west to the upper Congo or Lualaba, as Livingstone had called it, and, following the great river to its mouth, he reached the sea at Boma on August 9, 1877. Only two months before the journey's end, Francis Pocock, the last of Stanley's three white companions and the only one who was with him at the time of the Bumbire incident, had been drowned at a fall in the river.<sup>1</sup>

From Boma Stanley took ship for the Cape with the survivors of the men he had engaged at the outset of the expedition, and on November 28 he arrived at Zanzibar. Naturally, perhaps, he did not call on Kirk, nor Kirk on him. He was presented to the Sultan by the American consul, and had a private conversation with him, the gist of which was duly reported to Kirk. 'Mr. Stanley discoursed at great length regarding his personal adventures, especially on the many collisions he had had with native tribes who seem everywhere to have given way before Snider rifles and repeaters. King Mtesa of Uganda he praised highly, and he spoke of the immense wealth of ivory to be obtained by those first in the field.'<sup>2</sup> On December 13 Stanley, having paid off his men, sailed for England.

In those disbanded porters he left behind him witnesses of all he had done; and presently a crop of unsavoury rumours were in circulation. The Rev. J. Farler, of the U.M.C.A., who had been stationed for three years past in Usambara, informed his headquarters in London that Stanley's followers were giving 'dreadful accounts to their friends of the killing of inoffensive natives, stealing their ivory and goods, selling their captives, and so on. . . . If they are true it will do untold harm to the great cause of emancipating Africa.' Farler added that the many different tribes he had come across himself, though some of them were regarded by the Arabs as 'fierce', had always been friendly enough to him. 'A little selfish, perhaps, but fierce only

11. xii. 76: *ibid.* In answer to a question in the House of Commons in January 1878 Bourke said that it was known 'from an official source of undoubted credibility' that Stanley never received the intimation. H. of C., 29. i. 78: *Hansard*, cccxxvii, 623.

<sup>1</sup> Stanley, *op. cit.*, ii. 402. There is no evidence as to whether Pocock took part in the attack on the island.

<sup>2</sup> K. to D., 8. xii. 77: K.P. VIb, 289-90.

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when they are outraged. I cannot understand all the killing that Stanley has found necessary.'<sup>1</sup> Asked by the Foreign Office for a confidential report on the truth of these reports, Kirk himself questioned some of the men's leaders, and their answers, confirming as they did the news that had previously reached him from the interior, convinced him that the charges were 'substantially true'. 'If the story of this expedition were known, it would stand unequalled in the annals of African discovery for the reckless use of the power that modern weapons placed in his hands over natives who never before had heard a gun fired. . . . His proceedings will prove one of the principal obstacles that future explorers and missionaries will have to meet when following his track.'<sup>2</sup>

### 3

On the day before Stanley left, a party of Belgians arrived at Zanzibar. A newcomer, it seemed, had joined the international circle interested in East Africa. But it was an individual rather than a nation; for the sudden growth of colonial ambitions in Belgium and their swift and spacious fulfilment in the foundation of the Congo Free State were inspired and directed from the outset by one remarkable man. Leopold II was too able and adventurous to be content with a career confined within the Belgian frontiers and the functions of a constitutional king. No one in Europe had watched more closely the initial stages in the 'opening up' of tropical Africa, and no one knew better how to weave the various impulses and ideas it had excited—mercantile, scientific, philanthropic—into the web of his own designs. On September 12, 1876, he gathered at his palace in Brussels a distinguished company of explorers, geographers and others interested in Africa from various countries. Frere, Mackinnon and Buxton came from England, Nachtigal, Rohlf and Schweinfurth from Germany. A three-days' conference resulted in a resolution to

<sup>1</sup> F. to Sturge, 28. xii. 77, enclosed in F.O. to K., 28. ii. 78: K.P. VIb, 316.

<sup>2</sup> K. to D., 1. v. 78: K.P. VIb, 377. This dispatch gives several examples of Stanley's cruelty and misconduct as reported by his men, who were sometimes, they said, themselves the sufferers. In one circumstantial story Francis Pocock was the leading figure. It is difficult to believe that the men invented the stories because they thought Kirk and Farler wanted to hear them; they were the stories they had told their friends; and, even if fifty per cent. be disallowed as exaggeration, they are bad enough.

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establish an African International Association, based on Brussels, to promote the exploration and civilisation of Central Africa. National committees were to be set up in the participating countries which would raise funds for their common enterprise and appoint representatives to its governing body, the 'International Commission'. But international co-operation was not very much less difficult sixty years ago than it is now. The Royal Geographical Society, which was to organise the British national committee, decided that the committee, 'while maintaining friendly relations of correspondence with the Belgian and other committees, should not trammel itself with engagements of an international nature or with objects other than those connected with geography.'<sup>1</sup> The German, French and Italian committees assigned the greater part of the subscriptions they raised to projects of exploration conducted by their own nationals or in areas in which their national interests were involved. When, therefore, the International Commission held its first and only meeting at Brussels in June 1877, it found the funds at its disposal mainly Belgian and largely from Leopold's own pocket, and it was Leopold as president who virtually determined its bold decisions. An expedition was to be launched without delay from the East African coast to Lake Tanganyika where a 'scientific post' was to be established. Another expedition would then set out from the coast of Angola and proceed to the other side of the lake. Further posts would be established in due course at intervals along the routes, till the flag of the International Association, a golden star on a blue ground, flew right across the continent from ocean to ocean. The result of these operations, the king had said, would be the abolition of Slavery and the Slave Trade. 'Our roads and posts will greatly assist the evangelisation of the blacks and the introduction among them of commerce and modern industry.'<sup>2</sup>

Early in 1877, in the interval between the first and second stages of the negotiations on the Mackinnon Concession, Kirk was asked by the Foreign Office for his opinion on the outlines of this international scheme. In the absence of detailed information his reply was brief and cautious, but what he did say was typically realistic. 'It is not easy to conceive that a mutual

<sup>1</sup> *P.R.G.S.*, series i. xxi. 395.

<sup>2</sup> F. Masoin, *Histoire de l'Etat Indépendant du Congo* (Namur, 1912), i. 13-25.

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understanding would long subsist between the rival interests represented unless the Association is restricted to scientific objects.' The making of roads and posts would raise political and economic questions which would probably be dealt with by each national section of the Association in the interests of its own country. Nor would the primary objective of the scheme be attained if its operation were limited to the area between the Egyptian frontier and the Zambesi basin since 'the great slave-hunting fields' lay outside it. There would be complications, moreover, if the Sultan's dominions were 'treated as land not under special jurisdiction; for he has . . . certain rights well-defined on the coast and less clear over the interior'. These suggestions of practical difficulties would not, he hoped, be regarded as 'an ungracious criticism on so benevolent a scheme'. 'No nation', he concluded, 'is more interested, commercially or politically, in tropical Africa than we ourselves are, and our position is therefore not to be set aside. At the same time nothing is more certain than that, if this matter be judiciously [handled] and well supported by our philanthropists and merchants, the end now aimed at by the International Association, which has for years back been left to England alone, will be greatly promoted.'<sup>1</sup>

For several months Kirk heard no more of the Association. Waller came and began the Mackinnon negotiations and departed. And then, on December 12, the first international expedition arrived at Zanzibar. It would be more justly described as a Belgian expedition, or still more justly as King Leopold's, since it was organised and equipped by the Belgian national committee which Leopold controlled, and three of its four members, Captain Crespel, the leader, Lieutenant Cambier, and Dr. Maes were Belgians. The fourth was an Austrian, Major Marno, who unfortunately, as Kirk remarked, could not converse with his colleagues for lack of a common language. They brought with them a letter from Leopold to the Sultan, asking for his sympathy with 'the work of science and humanity' which this 'scientific mission' had undertaken.<sup>2</sup> Almost at once the tale of misfortune began which was to put to the test in

<sup>1</sup> K. to D., 7. iii. 77: K.P. VIa, 61.

<sup>2</sup> K. to D., 13. xii. 77 and 8. i. 78, enclosing Leopold to Sultan (undated): K.P. VIb, 296, 303-4.

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the next few years both the perseverance of the scheme's promoters and the courage of their agents in the field. Within six weeks of their arrival Maes was dead of sunstroke and Crespel of fever.<sup>1</sup> Marno had already thrown in his hand by then and sailed for home. So Cambier, who had succeeded to the leadership, was alone when in June he started for the interior. He soon met with the customary difficulties. Three-fourths of his porters deserted. The demands for *hongo* were extortionate. There were constant and protracted delays. But at last in mid-winter he reached Tabora with the remnant of his caravan. Meantime Lieutenant Wautier and Dr. Dutrieux had started in pursuit of him with another caravan, but before they caught up with him Wautier died of dysentery and Dutrieux was so ill that he turned back to the coast. So Cambier was still alone when, in May 1879, he set out from Tabora. In August he attained his goal, Lake Tanganyika, where he proceeded according to plan to establish a post at Karema on the lakeside about 150 miles south of Ujiji.<sup>2</sup>

In the previous March the man who was to do most to realise Leopold's designs had come back to Zanzibar. On landing at Marseilles in 1877, Stanley had been met by messengers from Leopold, asking him to attend another conference at Brussels for the furtherance of African enterprise; but, anxious that the execution of the project he had formed for the development of the Congo area should be in British hands, he had refused the invitation, and, returning straight to England, had made a vigorous attack on political and business circles in London and the North. It was only when he found an almost universal lack of interest in what seemed to him a proposition of immeasurable value that he had yielded to Leopold's repeated solicitations. In November he had gone to Brussels, assisted in the formation of the *Comité d'Études du Haut Congo*, which was soon to be identified with the International Association, and accepted the command of its first venture in West Africa.<sup>3</sup> It was to enlist porters for this expedition that he came to Zanzibar in March 1879;

<sup>1</sup> K. to D., 18 and 25. i. 78: K.P. VIb, 318-9.

<sup>2</sup> Masoin, i. 222-8. K. to Salisbury, 3. iii. 79: K.P. Vc, 68.

<sup>3</sup> *Autobiography*, 333-4. *The Congo and the Founding of its Free State* (London, 1885), i. 20-8.



but Kirk again did not see him, and his ignorance of his intentions was not enlightened by a personal letter which arrived by the same ship from Leopold. The King expressed the warmest appreciation of Kirk's 'immense services to the noble cause of the abolition of Slavery', regretted that official rules forbade his offering him a decoration, and begged him to accept a snuff box emblazoned with the royal monogram. Stanley, the letter continued, was coming out with Lieutenant Dutalis, an advance member of a second Belgian expedition, whom he would introduce to the Sultan and initiate in the technique of African exploration. 'Mr. Stanley will profit by his sojourn on the coast to explore some points he has not yet visited, but he will not be able to stay there long, his presence being, I think, required elsewhere.'<sup>1</sup>

In later life Stanley made no secret of his resentment at British criticism of his conduct and—what hurt him more—the inadequate recognition accorded to his African achievements. It may well be a sense of injury, therefore, that accounts for the tenor of a conversation he had on this occasion with Barghash—a conversation which Barghash at once repeated to Kirk. 'Mr. Stanley at first affected the greatest surprise at finding His Highness still the ruling sovereign of Zanzibar. He had been fully prepared, he said, to find that the English by this time had usurped his place, and under the cloak of commercial schemes deprived him of both power and position. This he knew to be their ultimate aim and object, for he had heard it discussed, he said, by most influential and exalted personages in England with whom he professed to be on terms of the greatest intimacy. After much conversation of this nature. . . . Mr. Stanley told His Highness that the King of the Belgians had very different objects in view in all he did for Africa.'<sup>2</sup>

In reporting this conversation to the Foreign Office Kirk expressed his belief, which was in fact correct, that Stanley's goal this time was not East Africa but the Congo. As to those attempts to undermine the Sultan's trust in Britain, he thought Stanley had 'overshot his mark and injured himself alone'. But a few weeks later he was not so sure of that. It happened that

<sup>1</sup> L. to K., 6. ii. 79: French original in K.P., personal letters: copy enclosed in K. to S., 24. iii. 79: K.P. Vc, 79–80.

<sup>2</sup> K. to S., 3. iv. 79: K.P. Vc, 86.

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Mackinnon had recently written to the Sultan asking for certain minor concessions in connexion with his road from Dar-es-Salaam, and Kirk had discussed it with Barghash and advised him to concede what was asked, provided that his own position on the coast were safeguarded. But at the end of May Kirk reported that the Sultan, though he had no confidence in Stanley, had been sufficiently shaken by his insinuations to refuse to consider Mackinnon's letter any further.<sup>1</sup>

To return to the Belgians, Dutalis was soon joined by the other two members of the second expedition, Captain Popelin and Dr. Van den Heuvel. Their plans, Kirk reported, were shrouded 'in secrecy and mystery' when in July 1879 they started inland from Bagamoyo. Dutalis was soon too ill to proceed and was ordered home. Meantime another party under the auspices of the Association had arrived at Zanzibar—a party whose business could not be concealed. Its most prominent members were four elephants from India. A Mr. Carter, an Englishman who had lived for some time in Irak, was in charge of them, and the object was to discover whether the elephants would prove more immune to the climate of the interior than other animals and so help to solve the problem of transport. Kirk took a keen interest in this experiment, and personally supervised the difficult business of disembarkation on the coast near Dar-es-Salaam.<sup>2</sup> In August Carter and his elephants joined up with Popelin's caravan. On the way through Ugogo two of the elephants died, but in October, mounted on the two survivors, Popelin, Van den Heuvel and Carter, at the head of a caravan some six hundred strong, made a triumphal entry into Tabora to the delirious delight of its inhabitants. Leaving Van den Heuvel at Tabora, where a plot of land had been acquired, Popelin pushed on to the post at Karema which had now been strongly fortified under Cambier's direction. He reached it in December and was soon joined by Carter and one elephant: the other had perished on the way.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> K. to S., 30. v. 79: K.P. Vc, 123.

<sup>2</sup> K. to S., 30. v. and 2. vi. 79: K.P. Vc, 122, 130. The Sultan was much interested in the elephants and both he and the Indian tax-farmers waived their right to trans-shipment duties on the animals and their accessories. K. to S., 30. v. 79: K.P. Vc, 123.

<sup>3</sup> Masoin, i. 228-9.

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At about this time one catches a glimpse of Karema through English eyes. The explorer, Joseph Thomson, as will appear in the next chapter, was on the lake in 1880, and in March he came with Hore, the missionary at Ujiji, to the Belgian post. 'This is one of the most extraordinary places for a station that could be found on the lake,' he wrote to Kirk, 'a wide expanse of marsh, a small village, no shelter for boats, only shallow water dotted with stumps of trees, no food to be got and natives hostile, far from any line of trade. They have commenced building forts and walls, digging ditches in regular military fashion as if they might expect an attack with cannon at any moment. . . . We were hailed by the jolly voice of Captain Carter who . . . had his elephant ready to take us across the marsh. . . .'<sup>1</sup>

That useful elephant soon suffered the fate of his three fellows; but, if the zoological experiment had failed,<sup>2</sup> the great design on the whole had prospered. At the outset of 1880 the royal strategist in Brussels had acquired two firm footholds in East Africa—at Tabora and Karema. Men had been lost as well as money spent, but both could be made good. In January 1880 Burdo and Roger started inland with instructions to cross the lake from Karema, traverse Manyema, and establish a post on the Lualaba. Cadenhead accompanied them, bound also for Karema where he was to assist Carter in looking after the elephants. Their journey was perilous since Mirambo was once more on the war-path; but in June the two Belgians were at Tabora while Cadenhead, travelling faster, had reached Karema. It was on his return march with Carter to Tabora that both lost their lives in the tragedy recorded in Chapter XII.<sup>3</sup>

### 4

What of the other nations whose footing at Zanzibar was far older than the Belgian? Were they leaving the mainland entirely to the newcomers?

<sup>1</sup> T. to K., 27. iii. 80: enclosed in K. to Granville, 24. vi. 80: K.P. VII. 462. Thomson gives a fuller description of Karema in *To the Central African Lakes and Back* (London, 1881), ii. 181-9.

<sup>2</sup> The British minister at Brussels reported in March 1880 that more elephants were to be sent out; but Leopold seems to have dropped the project. Lumley to Salisbury, 7. iii. 80: K.P. VII. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Masoin, i. 230-9, and see p. 263, above.

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Apart from the sympathy it had shown with Frere's mission, the Government of the United States, whose commercial treaty with Seyyid Said dated back as far as 1833, seems to have taken no interest whatever in a field so far removed from Washington. The German Government, similarly, though German traders were busily engaged there, took no political interest in East Africa till 1884. The colonial movement, as will be seen in Chapter XVII, was gathering force in the 'seventies, but not enough to disturb Bismarck's apathy on the subject. When Vice-Admiral Livonius, for example, submitted a report to the Admiralty in 1875, recommending colonial expansion and, in particular, a German East African protectorate based on Zanzibar, it was pigeon-holed for fear it should make trouble.<sup>1</sup> No political significance was attached to the scientific work on the River Tana of the Denhardt brothers in 1878. They obtained a grant of only 5,000 marks from the Government, and, when on their return they asked for 20,000 to 30,000 marks for the establishment of a German research station at Witu, they were told that that was not the business of the Foreign Office.<sup>2</sup> In 1880 the idea was mooted—and it was the Foreign Office this time—of obtaining a new commercial treaty from the Sultan in place of the Hanseatic treaty of 1859 and of having a consul-general instead of a consul at Zanzibar, but nothing came of it.<sup>3</sup> Nor was there any political meaning in the first appearance of a German warship in East African waters in 1882.<sup>4</sup> The only question, indeed, in which the German Foreign Office made any show of interest in this period was a personal question. Since the death of her husband in 1871, Emily Ruete<sup>5</sup> had found it increasingly difficult to maintain herself and her family. Seyyid Majid had permitted her to realise a substantial portion of the share she had inherited of Seyyid Said's property; but a great part of this had been lost, through no fault of hers, and she was no longer able to maintain her social position or edu-

<sup>1</sup> Livonius' report was ultimately published under the title of *Kolonialfragen* (Berlin, 1885): the reference to Zanzibar comes at the end, pp. 67-8.

<sup>2</sup> A. Zimmermann, *Geschichte der Deutschen Kolonialpolitik* (Berlin, 1914), 114.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 114-5.

<sup>4</sup> A. Coppius, *Hamburgs Bedeutung auf dem Gebiete der Deutschen Kolonialpolitik* (Berlin, 1905), 60.

<sup>5</sup> See pp. 46-8, above.

cate her children as she wished. She wrote accordingly more than once to her brother, Barghash, first asking for financial assistance and then demanding it as of right.<sup>1</sup> The German consul was instructed to do all he could to back her plea; but, whenever he raised the question, Barghash refused to discuss it. In 1874 the British ambassador's good offices were solicited, and Captain Prideaux, who was acting at that time for Kirk, was instructed by the Foreign Office to support the German consul if he should again approach the Sultan.<sup>2</sup> In the course of Barghash's visit to England in 1875 Kirk was asked by the German ambassador to deliver a letter from madame Ruete to her brother which, when it had been re-written at his suggestion in more tactful language, he consented to do. Strings were likewise pulled at Cairo, and a letter from the Khedive in unexceptionable terms was similarly entrusted to Kirk. He himself and Badger were induced at least to mention the matter to Barghash, and pressure was also brought to bear through members of his suite. It was even suggested that he might meet his sister, who had come to London, and be reconciled. Trivial though this affair might seem to be, it gave Kirk a good deal of discomfort and anxiety. Emily Ruete's plight, it appeared, had excited the most ardent sympathy in the highest circles in Berlin and London;<sup>3</sup> and her champions seemed wholly unaware that what seemed to them a simple matter of Christian charity might be otherwise regarded in an old-fashioned Moslem society. Did they realise that their romantic 'Arabian princess' had forfeited all the respect to which her birth entitled her in Moslem eyes by her *liaison* with a German clerk? Did they know that, if she had not been smuggled away with British aid, she would almost certainly have been put to death by Majid with the full approval of his family and all his subjects, and that, as it was, Majid and Barghash after him regarded her as dead and never spoke

<sup>1</sup> K. to Derby, 11. xii. 76: K.P. VIa, 4.

<sup>2</sup> F.O. to P., 27. v. 74: K.P. IV. 59.

<sup>3</sup> Under pressure from the German court, both the Sultan and Kirk were made to feel they had incurred the displeasure of the British royal family. The Sultan, for instance, was not invited to the Royal Enclosure when the Queen attended the Ascot races; and Kirk was rated by the Duke of Cambridge. The Prince of Wales, on the other hand, asked Kirk to see him and explain, and was convinced by what he said. (Communicated by Lt. Col. Kirk.)

her name? If it was not mere ignorance, it was, of course, mere insolence to continue pressing this very intimate and delicate subject on Barghash when he had shown that he resented it. Now, as before, he left the letters unanswered. He refused to meet his sister or even to talk of her. But still the attack persisted. Back at Zanzibar in 1876, Kirk reported to Lord Derby that Herr Veers, the German consul,<sup>1</sup> had paid an official call on orders from Berlin and, while frankly admitting that the Sultan could only be induced to recognise and help his sister by 'active pressure and the fear of consequences in case of refusal', had asked his opinion as to the possibilities of such drastic action as that implied. Kirk could only reply that he had no instructions in the matter. The reasons for Barghash's attitude, he wrote, are 'sufficiently obvious to anyone acquainted with oriental life and the obligation upon a Mohammedan ruler such as he is to respect the public opinion of his subjects.'<sup>2</sup> That checked the assault. Nothing more was heard of Emily Ruete at Zanzibar for some time.

5

The attitude of the French Government was naturally different from that of the American or German. France, like Britain, had established a commercial connexion with Muscat long before Seyyid Said transferred his capital to Zanzibar and began to consolidate his East African dominion; and from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards plans for obtaining a port and establishing a French colony on the East African seaboard were considered from time to time.<sup>3</sup> The occupation of Mayotta in 1840 had led to two or three attempts to gain a footing on the Somali coast,<sup>4</sup> and, as has been seen in Chapter II, French intervention in the disturbances of 1859 was inspired by the hope of securing with the aid of the pro-French faction the dominant position which Britain had held at Zanzibar since 1841. The upshot was a manifest rebuff to French diplomacy. The Decla-

<sup>1</sup> Robert Veers succeeded Schultz in June 1875.

<sup>2</sup> K. to D., 11. xii. 76: K.P. VIa, 4. Kirk's instructions in 1874 had clearly lapsed when he went to England in 1875 and discussed the matter with the F.O.

<sup>3</sup> See *East Africa and its Invaders*, chaps. iv and xiv.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 439-51.

ration of 1862 might seem to give France an equal status with Britain in maintaining the integrity of the Sultan's dominions, but in fact British influence remained supreme at Zanzibar; and, while British governments had no designs themselves on the coast, they made it clear that they were strongly opposed to French designs, implying, as they did, the creation of a strategic counterpoise to Aden. French prestige, accordingly, declined, and it fell still further when the Treaty of 1873 was successfully imposed on Barghash in the teeth, so it seemed to the Arabs, of French resistance. Since then, wrote Kirk five years later, 'French influence has been nothing in this country.'<sup>1</sup> French advances, for example, to Barghash, for a 'position' on the coast in 1876 and for the purchase of Mafia Island in 1877 were somewhat brusquely repelled.<sup>2</sup>

It was a desire to re-assert that earlier influence which in Kirk's belief accounted for a rather disagreeable incident in 1878. Reference has been made on a previous page to the importance of preventing 'gun-running' on the coast, the provisions against it in Said's treaties with the United States and France, and Barghash's monopoly of the sale of powder.<sup>3</sup> But, despite all that, in February 1878 the steamship *Adonis*, owned by Schloesing & Co. of Marseilles and flying the French flag, put in at Mogadishu and landed an armed party with a view to disposing of its cargo which included 150 cases of muskets and 44 cases of ammunition. Traders on the coast were in the habit of obtaining a letter of introduction from the Sultan to his Governors; but these Frenchmen had not been to Zanzibar, and, as soon as the Governor learned the nature of their business, he forbade it. The *Adonis* then steamed off to Barawa where exactly the same thing happened.<sup>4</sup> When the disappointed gun-runners arrived at Zanzibar, the French consul presented a curt note to the Sultan, protesting against the violation of the Treaty of 1844 and demanding the 'exemplary punishment' of the two Governors and the payment of compensation to Schloesing & Co. for the loss they had suffered. Barghash thought it wise to concede that his Governors had been 'foolish', and,

<sup>1</sup> K. to Salisbury, 9. xii. 78: K.P. Vc, 16.

<sup>2</sup> K. to Derby, 25. iv. 77: K.P. VIa, 111.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 262, above.

<sup>4</sup> Governor of Barawa to Sultan, 26. ii. 78, enclosure no. 5 in K. to Salisbury, 3. xii. 78: K.P. Vc, 5.

summoning them to Zanzibar, he put them in formal confinement for two days. But on the other points he stiffened his back. The Treaty, he explained, prohibited French subjects from importing *munitions de guerre* into his dominions if he were at war; and the hostile conduct of the Somali—they had recently attacked a body of his troops near Barawa and slain his Governor—was tantamount to war.<sup>1</sup>

The dispute was referred to Paris, and it was not till the summer of 1879 that the French Government's decision was communicated to Barghash. His interpretation of the Treaty was rejected, and the demand for compensation to Schloesing & Co. was maintained. They had assessed their loss at nearly 180,000 francs, but the French Government on their behalf would accept the sum of 100,000 francs if it were paid at once. Otherwise an additional sum would be charged 'on account of interest and other expenses that may be occasioned'. The hint contained in those last words was not lost on Barghash. He was confronted, he saw, with something like an ultimatum, and he at once filled in a cheque on his Paris agents. 'We are unable', he said, 'to resist the French Government.'<sup>2</sup>

Kirk had watched these proceedings with indignation. 'As now read and enforced against the ruler,' ran his final comment to Lord Salisbury, 'the existing commercial treaties are construed by France to entitle their subjects to deluge any part of the Zanzibar dominions with arms of precision and ammunition, secure that, if this is interfered with, their Government will step in and see enforced any claim for exemplary damages, however frivolous, that may be made.' It would be easy, he added, by such methods 'to ruin the Sultan and make government impossible'.<sup>3</sup> This dispatch was forwarded to the British

<sup>1</sup> Treaty of 1844, article XIV. Text in M. Guillaïn, *Documents sur ... l'Afrique Orientale* (Paris, 1856), iii. 463-4.

<sup>2</sup> K. to S., 3. xii. 78, enclosing de Ferry to Sultan, 23 and 27. iii. 78 and Sultan to de F., 23 and 28. iii. and 29. xi. 78. K.P. Vc, 7 ff. K. to S., 24. vii. 79, enclosing de F. to Sultan, 30. vi. 79 and Sultan to de F., 10. vii. 79. K.P. Vc, 171. The *Adonis*' cargo was valued at about 50,000 francs. She revisited Barawa with the Sultan's explicit permission to trade, but failed to do business there. Among other items charged for compensation in the detailed account submitted by Schloesing & Co. was the cost of bringing the *Adonis* from England where she had been purchased to Marseilles, of her equipment and stores, and of her voyage to East Africa.

<sup>3</sup> K. to S., 24. vii. and 22. x. 79: K.P. Vc, 170, 208.



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Embassy in Paris, and it was pointed out to M. Waddington at the Quai d'Orsay that all Powers interested in East Africa would suffer from an unchecked traffic in arms along the coast. Under this pressure the French Government declared that they did not dispute the Sultan's right to prohibit the arms traffic but that their action had been justified by the fact that due notice had not been given of its prohibition.<sup>1</sup> There the matter lay till the end of 1879 when Kirk was informed that Lord Lyons considered it inadvisable to make further representations to the French Government. 'Under the circumstances the matter may drop.'<sup>2</sup>

While this unpleasant controversy was running its course, a French enterprise of a very different character was afoot in the interior. Early in 1878 the Chamber of Deputies voted the impressive sum of 100,000 francs to equip an expedition across Central Africa from east to west. Its leader was to be a hitherto unknown French priest, thirty-three years old, the Abbé Michel-Alexandre Debaize. Fired by dreams of African exploration, he went to Brussels in 1877 and offered his services to the International Association. He was too late, he was told: the first Belgian expedition was already manned. But the young zealot's enthusiasm had won him influential friends in Paris, and it was they who appealed to the Chamber. Mindful of Caillé and Levaillant, France, they said, must take her share in the new campaign of African discovery. Presently the French national committee of the International Association would undertake this task; but it was not yet ready for it, and, meantime, the Abbé could blaze the trail.<sup>3</sup>

In May 1878 Debaize arrived at Zanzibar, and in July he left Bagamoyo on the first stage of his transcontinental journey in command of an enormous caravan. He had engaged more than 800 porters, and they carried on their heads a vast supply of the customary provisions and trade goods together with an assortment of curious novelties—several boxes of dynamite, twelve cases of rockets and fireworks, two coats of armour, two loads of 'penny pop-guns' and one of little bells, twenty-four umbrellas,

<sup>1</sup> F.O. to K., 17. x. 79: K.P. Vc, 196.      <sup>2</sup> F.O. to K., 13. xi. 79: *ibid.*, 225.

<sup>3</sup> A. Rabaud, *L'Abbé Debaize et sa mission géographique et scientifique dans l'Afrique Centrale* (Marseille, 1880), 7-23.

and a barrel-organ, the last presumably to 'soothe the savage breast'. 'Truly a little army', as Greffulhe, who saw the Abbé off, remarked, and at its head 'a young and inexperienced general'.<sup>1</sup> But if Debaize knew nothing of Africa, his courage and determination almost made up for it. 'The thought', he said, 'that I am working for the glory of God and the glory of France will sustain me in all my trials.'<sup>2</sup> All went well for a time with his cumbrous caravan, and in October he was safely at Tabora where, like all other travellers, he was warmly welcomed by the Governor and the leading Arabs. It was after Tabora his troubles began. In the course of an eight days' march through thick forest he was attacked at night by brigands. They were repelled and pursued and several of them killed or captured.<sup>3</sup> More alarming was the trouble he now experienced with his porters. There were murmurings and presently desertions, and his army was a little thinned when in May 1879 it marched into Ujiji.

There he became the guest not of the French White Fathers but of Hore, whose larger house could better accommodate the new arrival's bulky baggage. Undismayed by continued desertions, Debaize, after visiting the Belgian station at Karema, began to shift his belongings, boatload by boatload, to Uguha towards the north end of the Lake, whence he planned to strike across Manyema to the Congo. The L.M.S. missionaries stationed there were as friendly as Hore, and they helped to extricate Debaize from difficulties he encountered with a neighbouring chief. But by now his physical strength was breaking under the ceaseless strain he put on it. A touch of sunstroke was followed by protracted fever. His sight was affected and soon he was quite blind. 'I am sure to succeed' were the last words of his last letter to Zanzibar.<sup>4</sup> On December 12 he died. He seems to have become greatly attached to Hore who nursed him as best he could, and he left to him the onerous duty of winding up the expedition and disposing of its stores.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, 33.

<sup>2</sup> D. to G., 17. x. 78: *ibid.*, 36.

<sup>3</sup> D. to G., 10. xi. 78: *ibid.*, 40. It was reported to Kirk that the murder of Penrose (see p. 263, above) was an act of vengeance by the victims' fellow-tribesmen: K.P. Vc, 65.

<sup>4</sup> D. to G., 27. ix. 79: Rabaud, 43.

<sup>5</sup> Debaize's end is fully described in Hore's letters (15. xii. 79) to the French consul at Zanzibar and to Greffulhe: *ibid.*, 45-54. Thomson came to Ujiji within a month of Debaize's death and records what he heard of him from Hore: *op. cit.*, ii. 92-6.

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The next French move was on a more worldly plane than Debaize's swift and pathetic crossing of the African stage. In the winter of 1880-1 Kirk discovered that the agent of a French firm at Zanzibar was asking Barghash for a concession to Monsieur E. Rabaud of Marseilles who was incidentally Barghash's consul-general in France.<sup>1</sup> It was a delicate matter for Kirk who, as has been seen, had recently recommended a British concession to Barghash; but it appeared that the main feature of Rabaud's project was the 'exclusive use of a central coast harbour', and Kirk at once pointed out to Barghash that that provision, like some of the provisions in the first draft of the Mackinnon Concession, was a violation of the commercial treaties. For some time Kirk heard no more of the business; but when in the middle of February he asked Barghash what had happened, he was surprised to learn that the Concession was about to be granted. Barghash gave him a copy of its terms. There were thirteen articles of which the more important were the following. (i) Rabaud's company was to build a railway along the line of the great trade route from Bagamoyo to Ujiji. (ii) The concession was to continue for ninety-nine years. (iii) The Sultan would station troops for the protection of the railway: their pay and equipment would be provided by the Company. (v) Mining rights would belong to the Company, the Sultan receiving half the profits therefrom. (vii) No other company would be permitted to operate in the area traversed by the railway except by arrangement with Rabaud's. (ix) The Company would be allowed to build a pier, quays, docks, business premises, hotels and banks, and provide a telegraph-system and water-supply at Bagamoyo. (x) The Sultan's customs-duties would remain as they were or might be fixed by treaty. (xiii) The Company would grant the Sultan a loan of 500,000 dollars (about £111,000) free of interest for which he would issue notes payable at the bank.<sup>2</sup>

It is surprising that Barghash should have been so eager to accept this French proposal, when he had so recently let a British proposal drop which on nearly every point had been more

<sup>1</sup> The firm was Roux, Frassinetti & Co. The agent was probably M. Greffulhe, *chancelier* at the French Consulate: see preceding page and next page, note 2.

<sup>2</sup> Draft Articles of Agreement for the construction of a railway and working other concessions between the Sultan of Zanzibar and M. Rabaud of Marseilles, enclosed in K. to G., 3. iii. 81: K.P. VIII. 224.

advantageous to him. The French company did not propose to take the burden of responsibility for the administration and advancement of his mainland dominions off his shoulders. Its activities were to be confined to the one belt of country through which the railway was to run. Nor was there any question of extending its operations through the interior by making treaties with the chiefs. Barghash, therefore, would obtain no guarantee for the effective development of the mainland as a whole or, what was more important, for the preservation of its political integrity. Mackinnon's officials would have kept his flag flying at every port from Warsheikh to the Portuguese frontier and carried it in due course into the interior. Rabaud would only hold the line from Bagamoyo to Ujiji. The only point, indeed, on which the French proposal bettered the British was that Rabaud offered twice as big a loan. Moreover, as Kirk explained to Barghash, there was nothing in the document to ensure that the railway or any other public works would be completed or even begun by the company during the term of the concession, so that the Sultan and his heirs might lose control of that important midland belt of country for a century without the company doing or allowing anyone else to do anything for its development. 'The moment', Kirk reported, 'that these things had been explained to His Highness the fate of the Concession was not doubtful, and negotiations were broken off. It is, however, important for us to bear in mind how easily by the most abject and gross flattery . . . the Sultan was brought to the very point of signing so dangerous and foolish a contract.'<sup>1</sup>

Rumours, no doubt, of these negotiations circulated freely among the Arabs of Zanzibar and served to keep alive the old tradition of French political interest in the coast. Thus, Kirk wrote *à propos* of a coinage contract obtained by a French firm in 1883 that the disclosure of it had given rise 'in town to a suspicion that the Sultan may have committed himself to other schemes of perhaps a more dangerous nature.'<sup>2</sup> But in fact there

<sup>1</sup> K. to G., 3. iii. 81: K.P. VIII. 224.

<sup>2</sup> K. to G., 28. ix. 83: K.P. Xa, 206. The contract for a supply of coinage was obtained by M. Greffulhe on behalf of his Marseilles firm, Roux Frassiniet & Co., but, soon after the arrival of the first consignment of coins, the firm went bankrupt with liabilities at Zanzibar amounting to £100,000. The contract was the subject of arbitration in 1892-3. K. to Granville, 28. ix. and 5. xii. 83: K.P. Xa, 206; Xb, 119; K.P. XV.

was little to be feared from French territorial designs during this period. French ministers were no longer minded to dispute Britain's priority at Zanzibar, nor to set naval officers seeking for a counterpoise to Aden at one or other of the Benadir ports. When in 1881, as will shortly appear, French explorers and traders were taking part in the invasion of the interior, the French Government were not actively concerned, and by 1884 their attention had become diverted once for all to an area far nearer to their bases at Réunion and Mayotta and seemingly as rich in its economic possibilities as any area of the mainland—the huge luxuriant island of Madagascar. Since the accession of Queen Ranavolo II in 1868 the policy of the Hova Government, supported by the British Methodist missions, had been so sharply anti-French and anti-Catholic that in 1883 a formidable expedition under Admiral Pierre was sent out to bring the Hovas to reason. Majunga and Tamatave were bombarded and occupied; but, mainly owing to distractions in Annam and Tonkin, Hova resistance was not broken till 1885 when Ranavolo III, who had succeeded to the throne in 1883, signed a treaty under which the French secured not only free trade and religious toleration in Madagascar but also the control of Hova foreign policy, a foothold on Diego Suarez bay, and an indemnity of ten million francs.<sup>1</sup> At the same time the French position in the Comoro Isles was strengthened. In 1884 M. Humblot, a naturalist, observing that the German flag had been hoisted on Grand Comoro, promptly hauled it down, ran up the French flag in its place, and in the following year concluded a treaty of friendship with the principal chief of the island which barred him from accepting any foreign protectorate without the consent of France.<sup>2</sup> About the same time the Sultan of Anjouan was induced to sign an agreement putting his island under German protection; but when the document reached Berlin, Bismarck

<sup>1</sup> These developments were anxiously watched in England. The conduct of Admiral Pierre, in particular, who imprisoned the Rev. G. A. Shaw, a militant pro-Hova missionary, on the charge of attempting to poison some French soldiers, led to such vigorous protests by the British Government that Pierre was recalled (he shot himself on the way home) and Shaw was paid an indemnity of 25,000 francs. For Madagascar in this period, see Hanotaux et Martineau, *Histoire des Colonies Françaises* (Paris, 1930-3), vi. 134-74, and S. Howe, *The Drama of Madagascar* (London, 1938), pt. ii. chaps. ix-xi.

<sup>2</sup> Hanotaux et Martineau, *op. cit.*, vi. 293-4.

refused to confirm it. He recognised the Comoros, he said, as lying within the orbit of France; and the matter was finally settled when on June 25, 1886, the French Government declared that protectorates had been established over Mohilla and Anjonan.<sup>1</sup>

## 6

It appears, then, that the only important or wide-spread attempt to stake out a claim in East Africa on the morrow of the Egyptian invasion was Mackinnon's, and that, as has been seen, broke down. So the Belgian lead in the Scramble had not been seriously challenged when in the spring of 1880 the political background of Leopold's operations was suddenly disclosed. A plan for a Belgian 'colony' in East Africa, sketched out by General Lahune, was communicated to the British minister at Brussels and passed on to the Foreign Office, whence it came on to Kirk for comment. On the possibility of a colony in the sense of a large-scale settlement of Europeans, Kirk's opinion was as definite as Livingstone's. 'As to Central Africa being an outlet for European colonisation I am satisfied that there is no region within the tropics of Africa fit for colonisation in the sense in which we in England use the word. No doubt there are districts, as in India, where Europeans may live and enjoy comparative health, but not where children can grow up and inherit the health necessary for a self-sustaining colony. Those healthy spots, moreover, may not always be the best for trade and profit.' The control of tropical Africa and the development of trade therein were another matter. 'Africa can be held as India now is by us, but a large amount of capital will be needed to make this profitable except near the coast where communication with Europe is easy.' It was a 'colonial' project in this sense, which had now emerged from 'the vague and at first apparently objectless efforts of the Belgian Association on this coast'. 'That Association has for this purpose secured land at Karema and also at Unyanyembe [Tabora], and these stations are now spoken of and held as Belgian property. But, as General Lahune points out, stations in the interior are untenable without a territorial footing on the coast. This, however, is a question which

<sup>1</sup> *D.D.F.*, series i. vol. vi. 253 note 3, 262, 264.

will have to be approached with greater caution.' And that perhaps was why a Belgian consul, whose appointment had recently been announced, was wanted at Zanzibar. But, in any case, Kirk doubted the success of Belgian commercial enterprise in East Africa. American, other European, and British Indian traders were already established there; and there were as yet few products of the interior which would pay for the cost of transport to the coast. The Belgian chance was surely on the Congo. . . . A characteristically incisive and prophetic dispatch.<sup>1</sup>

In June the Belgian consul-designate, M. Emile de Ville, arrived,<sup>2</sup> and with him came another letter for Kirk from Leopold. It thanked him in cordial terms for all the assistance he had given to the members of the Belgian expeditions; it expressed the highest respect for his opinions on African questions; and it commended de Ville to his good-will. 'Our consul', wrote Leopold with engaging frankness, 'is not a political agent; we have no political interests properly speaking in Africa. We hope that the progress of civilisation will lead to the development of commercial relations between Africa, the state of Zanzibar, and all the countries of Europe.'<sup>3</sup> Whether or not de Ville's intentions were quite as innocent as this, he was personally much liked by his colleagues, and there was general regret when he died of some obscure complaint in the first week of January 1881.<sup>4</sup> A few days before his death he had intimated to Barghash his Government's desire to conclude a commercial treaty with Zanzibar.<sup>5</sup> There was nothing unusual or disquieting in that. But Kirk had been right in anticipating an application for a port. De Ville's royal master, it appears, had been acting behind his back; for in the previous July he had authorised Consul-General Rabaud to commend to the Sultan a request which M. Greffulhe, the *chancelier* at the French consulate, had been charged by Leopold to submit to him. The king, wrote Rabaud, desired a 'station' near Malindi for training African elephants. Big buildings would have to be erected, roads made, and a harbour built. 'Such a station must have at least the means of

<sup>1</sup> K. to S., 8. iii. 80: K.P. VII. 424.

<sup>2</sup> K. to Granville, 1. vi. 80: K.P. VII. 454.

<sup>3</sup> L. to K., 3. v. 80: French original in K.P., personal letters.

<sup>4</sup> K. to G., 6. i. 81: K.P. VIII. 182.

<sup>5</sup> K. to G., 7. 1. 81: K.P. VIII. 183.

government within itself, but not necessarily that of sovereignty.' That part of the coast might be leased to Leopold for ninety years on the payment of an annual sum in lieu of customs-dues. 'This does not enter the mind of the Belgian king', so Rabaud earnestly affirmed, 'through any desire for gain or profit to himself, but solely through the wish of laying out large sums of money for the eventual benefit of your heirs and successors. . . . Consider how you can meet the wishes of the king who has', Rabaud rubs it in, 'no personal ambition or hidden design in this.' 'You are aware, no doubt,' he blithely runs on, 'that the king of the Belgians is a constitutional sovereign . . . and is not permitted to meddle in political affairs. For this reason M. de Ville knows nothing of this which is a matter that relates to the king alone in his private and royal capacity.'<sup>1</sup>

Kirk's comment on this letter, of which he obtained his customary copy, was dry and brief. The Sultan would doubtless say that freedom of trade and residence was enjoyed by all nations in treaty relations with Zanzibar and that he could not confer exclusive privileges on any single nation or individual.<sup>2</sup> That, no doubt, is what Barghash did say. The elephant-school at Malindi fades out of the picture. But it is interesting to speculate whether the request Rabaud made a few months later for a concession was really on his own behalf. May it not in fact have been a second stealthy move of Leopold's?

In that year, 1880, a marked intensification of European interest in East Africa can be observed. Quite a little company of pioneers arrived on de Ville's heels at Zanzibar. The German and French national committees, to begin with, were no longer minded to permit the objects of the International Association to be pursued by Belgians only. On June 1 Kirk reported that a German expedition of four members, with Count von Schoeler in command, was preparing to occupy the district between Karema and Mpwapwa, and that the forerunner of a French expedition, Captain Bloyet, had also arrived and spoke of occupying the Usagara country. With the latter had come also M. Sergère, the head of a French commercial company, who pro-

<sup>1</sup> R. to Sultan, 2. vii. 80: English translation enclosed in K. to G., 27. vii. 80: K.P. VII. 479.

<sup>2</sup> K. to G., as in preceding note.



posed to start a trade in ivory at Tabora—a bold enough design, since the Arab traders were certain to resent his intrusion into their preserve. There were several missionaries, too, from the L.M.S., bound for Mirambo's court, Ujiji and Manyema.<sup>1</sup> Finally, the members of the third Belgian expedition arrived—Captain Ramaeckers, who had recently crossed the Sahara from Tripoli to Lake Chad, Lieutenant de Leu and sub-Lieutenants Becker and de Meuse.<sup>2</sup>

In July Ramaeckers started off from Bagamoyo and presently joined forces with von Schoeler and Sergère. In October they all reached Tabora where Sergère 'set up shop'. No more is heard of him, but when the Russian explorer, Wilhelm Junker, came to Tabora in 1886, he found one Giesecke in Sergère's place as representative of the firm. Giesecke told him that he had recently been shot at, and a few days later he was again attacked and so seriously wounded that he died shortly afterwards.<sup>3</sup>

At the end of 1880 Ramaeckers was at Karema with Popelin and the three or four younger officers. Burdo had gone home, and Cambier, handing over the command to Ramaeckers, now followed him. For the next year or so little progress was made at the settlement beyond the assembling and launching of a *bateau de fer* on the lake. Popelin died in May 1881, and Ramaeckers in March 1882, leaving Becker in command. In June 1882 yet another expedition, the fourth, started inland from the coast. Its leader was Lieutenant Storms, and, making unusually quick progress, he reached Karema in September. At the end of the year Becker went home, and Storms, taking charge, gave a new and vigorous turn to the enterprise. He not only improved and strengthened the post at Karema; he crossed the lake, and created a second post at Mpala on its western shore. There he remained till 1885 when he was recalled and left with his staff for Europe, entrusting the two posts to the care of the White Fathers who since 1879 had begun to establish mission stations on the Lake. Meantime, in the course of 1884, a fifth Belgian

<sup>1</sup> K. to G., i. vi. 80: K.P. VII. 456.

<sup>2</sup> Masoin, i. 239.

<sup>3</sup> W. Junker, *Travels in Central Africa* (London, 1890-2), iii. 560-2. Junker gives a vivid account of the incident and illustrates it with a striking woodcut. The Arab suspected of the murder was arrested on a visit to the coast in 1890, and tried and executed.

expedition had arrived at Zanzibar, but before starting inland it had been ordered back to Belgium.<sup>1</sup>

Kirk's predictions had come true. Leopold's designs on Africa had swung from east to west. Stanley's visit to Zanzibar in 1879 had been the prelude to those five years of ruthless toil by which he asserted his authority and opened up communications on the lower reaches of the Congo. On November 15, 1884, an international Conference assembled at Berlin, and before it concluded its labours on February 26, 1885 with the signature of the Berlin Act, most of the governments represented had recognised the sovereignty of the International Association over the Congo Free State. It was an astonishing achievement on Leopold's part. In less than a decade he had brought his 'benevolent' scheme to full fruition. A few more years of preparation and then, with wealth and power in his grasp greater and more corrupting than perhaps he had imagined, he could sit down in comfort to write the bloodiest pages in the story of the relations between Europe and Africa since the ending of the European Slave Trade.

## 7

Meantime two French explorers were operating in East Africa with better judgment than Debaize but with not much better fortune. Georges Révoil, who had journeyed down the coast from Somaliland to Zanzibar in 1878,<sup>2</sup> returned to the Benadir in 1883 with the intention of penetrating inland. After a month at Mogadishu he made his way to Geledi, the centre of a large and warlike Somali community whose principal sheikh had been accustomed to treat the Benadir ports as virtually subject and tributary to him.<sup>3</sup> It is interesting, therefore, to learn that, after many vain efforts to obtain the sheikh's protection for the next stage of his journey, Révoil finally got his way by bringing pressure to bear from the Governor of Mogadishu and by 'a threat of the anger of the Sultan of Zanzibar'. Evidently Barghash's authority in the Benadir was stronger than it once had

<sup>1</sup> Masoin, i. 239-61—a detailed and picturesque account.

<sup>2</sup> This expedition is described in Révoil's *Voyage au Cap des Aromates* (Paris, 1880), part i. He spent some time at Barawa and Mogadishu and observed that the fortifications begun by the Sultan's Governor at the former place in 1877 were nearly completed in March 1878. *Op. cit.*, 55.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 63, above, and *East Africa and its Invaders*, 336.

been. Révoil, however, did not get much farther inland. Having failed in several attempts to reach Gananeh, he returned to the coast.<sup>1</sup> The second explorer was Victor Giraud who started from Dar-es-Salaam at the end of 1882 on an attempt to cross the continent to the Atlantic. He made first for Karema whence he travelled south-westwards to Lake Mweru and Lake Bangweolo, supplementing and on one point correcting Livingstone's observations. But his progress down the River Luapula was barred by hostile natives, and he was forced to return to Karema. He then crossed the Lake and struck west for the upper Congo. Before long, however, he was deserted by all his men, and finally he made his way back alone to the coast at Quilimane. The deserters 'retained the French flag and their *chasse-pôt* rifles and turned highwaymen on their long journey back to Zanzibar', where at the instance of the French consul they were arrested and imprisoned.<sup>2</sup>

The most famous of the German explorers in this period, Hermann Wissmann, was more concerned with West Africa than East. He emerged, it is true, on the east coast from his two crossings of the continent in 1880-3 and in 1886-7; but the important part of his work had been done before he reached Lake Tanganyika. In East Africa German pioneering was more purposeful and systematic than the French; and, if it concerned itself, like the Belgian, with founding 'stations' as well as discovering new lands and routes, it made substantial additions to the stock of geographical knowledge. Von Schoeler, as has been seen, came to Zanzibar in 1880 on behalf of the German national committee of the International Association which had become identified with the German African Society of Berlin, founded in 1878.<sup>3</sup> In 1881 the Society sent out R. Böhm, E.

<sup>1</sup> *P.R.G.S.*, n.s. v. 717-9; vi. 232, 295, 476. Kirk's intermittent Journal contains this amusing scrap (27. ii. 84): 'Mons. Révoil arrived in a dhow. He has been examining and photographing and mutilating all the ruins down the coast. He says he has a fine collection of old china taken from the monuments.'

<sup>2</sup> Paris Geographical Society, *Compte Rendu des Séances*, 1885, 209-44. *P.R.G.S.*, n.s. v. 238; vi. 232, 377; vii. 332-7, 603-6. Though Giraud's main purpose was frustrated, his scientific work was highly valued by European geographers.

<sup>3</sup> The German African Society of Berlin was formed from a union of the German Society for the Exploration of Equatorial Africa (founded 1873) and the German African Society (founded 1876): J. Scott Keltie, *The Partition of Africa*, 165.

Kaiser and P. Reichard to join up with von Schoeler and establish a station near Tabora. Kakoma was selected, but, as it proved unhealthy, Reichard proceeded to Lake Tanganyika and chose a new site at Gonda. Meanwhile Böhm and Kaiser visited the Belgian station at Karema, whence Böhm went on to Gonda. In February 1883 Böhm and Reichard journeyed from Gonda to Karema, where Kaiser had died in the previous October, and continued southwards to the Luapula and thence to the marshy area round Lake Upemba, one of the main sources of the Congo. Böhm died there in March 1884, and Reichard went on alone to the copper-country of Katanga which he reached in May. In September he was back at Mpala, the new Belgian station on Lake Tanganyika, and thence he returned to Zanzibar and sailed for home.<sup>1</sup> Further valuable work was done by Count Pfeil in the course of three journeys between 1885 and 1887—on which, incidentally, he was engaged in making treaties with the chiefs on behalf of the German East African Society founded in 1884.<sup>2</sup> From his base in Usagara he first went south to the River Rufiji and thence east to the coast; next, he explored the Uhebe plateau and the upper Rufiji, known as the Ulanga; and lastly, starting up the Pangani River, he skirted the wide steppe-land that stretches southwards from Chagga and came back to the sea at Bagamoyo.<sup>3</sup>

In 1885 Wilhelm Junker, who was not, as his name suggests, a Prussian, but a Russian from St. Petersburg, having made a series of journeys in the southern Sudan, struck across from Wadelai by Lake Albert to Uganda where he stayed with the C.M.S. missionary, Mackay, and had several interviews with Mtesa's successor, Mwanga. In the summer of 1886 he proceeded to the southern end of Lake Victoria and thence to Tabora. At the end of November he arrived at Bagamoyo.<sup>4</sup>

Apart from Reichard's journey to Katanga—and that lay beyond the strictly East African field—these enterprises were of minor geographical importance. They added detail to the main outlines of the East African map as they were known when

<sup>1</sup> *P.R.G.S.*, n.s. iii. 186, 371; iv. 570-2; v. 551; vii. 303-6. Petermann's *Mitteilungen*, xxxi. 273

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter XVII, below.

<sup>3</sup> *P.R.G.S.*, n.s. ix. 47-8; x. 94-5.

<sup>4</sup> W. Junker, *op. cit.*, iii. chap. xiii.

Livingstone died: they traced the side-tracks, so to speak, between the great main roads. There was only one major task of exploration left undone in 1873—the penetration of the Kenya Highlands through which ran the direct route from the Indian Ocean to Uganda and the Nile. It was this that G. A. Fischer attempted in 1883. He had been previously associated with the Denhardt brothers in their expeditions up the River Tana, and in 1882 he was commissioned by the Hamburg Geographical Society to find a way from Kilimanjaro to Lake Baringo which was known to lie somewhere north of the Kenya Highlands. At the end of the year he set out up the Pangani valley and, crossing the southern outskirts of the Kilimanjaro massif to Arusha, turned northwards towards his distant goal. He was soon confronted by the obstacle which had so long blocked the road to Uganda for Arabs and Europeans alike—not the character of the country, but the character of its inhabitants, the fierce Masai. Fischer's first contact with them led to 'a bloody combat'. They attacked his porters who, firing in self-defence, killed two of the famous warriors. A third was shot by accident. If the Masai had gathered in strength to avenge their comrades, Fischer and all his party must have been overwhelmed; but 'they were reasonable enough to acknowledge', says Fischer, 'that the deaths were not premeditated'. So he was allowed to continue his journey, and in due course he entered the strange Rift Valley and reached Lake Naivasha in the south-east highland area. He was now within a week's march of Lake Baringo, but he got no farther. An army of three thousand Masai barred the way. Unable to persuade his timorous porters to outflank them by stealing through the forest, he perforce turned back and, coming down to the coast by roughly the same way he had gone up, he arrived at Zanzibar in August 1883. At least he had set foot in the Kenya Highlands—the first European to do so, since Krapf had only looked at them from the upper reaches of the Tana in 1851.<sup>1</sup> But it was the other and better known highlands, those of Kilimanjaro, in which he seems to have been most interested. All the country, he declared, between Taveta and Arusha was 'well adapted for European settlement'.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See *East Africa and its Invaders*, 404.

<sup>2</sup> *Mitt. Geog. Ges. Hamburg*, v. 36-99, 189-279; *P.R.G.S.*, n.s. v. 32, 658; vi. 76-83.

How Joseph Thomson succeeded in reaching Lake Baringo a few months after Fischer's failure will be recorded in the next chapter; but mention must here be made of the later achievements of Count Samuel Teleki who came out to East Africa with Lieutenant L. von Höhnelt in 1887 on what was meant to be a big-game and mountaineering expedition but resulted in a great geographical discovery. They went first to Kilimanjaro which they climbed to a height of 17,387 feet, and then to Mount Kenya which they climbed to 15,355 feet. They had trouble on the way with the Kikuyu, and, in view of what has been told of Stanley and what will be told of Thomson, von Höhnelt's comment on the incident may be quoted. 'There is altogether a wrong impression abroad', he wrote, 'as to the proper treatment by a traveller of hostile natives. In districts where might makes right, and retaliation is the custom of the country, submission and forbearance are looked upon as signs of fear and weakness, and to employ force is the only means of producing the necessary impression. The oft-repeated assertion that the forcible entry of one traveller adds to the difficulties the next will have to encounter is altogether false and could not be uttered by anyone at all familiar with the subject. As for me, I would far rather follow in the footsteps of a European who has known how to make himself feared than in those of some roving philanthropist.'<sup>1</sup> No other East African traveller put that opinion on record, and no other, it may be added, sneered at Livingstone. . . . Teleki and von Höhnelt reached Lake Baringo in February 1888, and on March 6 they were the first white men to set eyes on huge Lake Rudolf, outrivalled only by Victoria, Tanganyika and Nyasa. Making up the east side of the lake and then east from its northern end, they discovered Lake Stefanie—a smaller but quite considerable sheet of water. Thence they returned to the coast by way of Lake Naivasha and Taveta, reaching Mombasa in October.

<sup>1</sup> L. von Höhnelt, *Discovery of Lakes Rudolf and Stefanie* (London, 1894), i. 335-6. Thomson records a similar but somewhat less aggressive attitude among the Belgians at Karema. 'We naturally spoke about the treatment of natives. The three captains showed a strong military tendency in their ideas. They put implicit faith in their guns, holding it as an axiom that every native who meets them is thirsting for their blood. . . . Not one of them will ever venture half-a-dozen steps from the door without his favourite weapon.' *Op. cit.*, ii. 191.

The last and the best part of the Scramble remains to be dealt with—the part played by the missionaries. The Protestant societies operating in East Africa in this period were almost exclusively British and their work will be briefly discussed in the next chapter. German missions were not on the scene till a few years later. The Berlin Missionary Society founded a station at Dar-es-Salaam and the Neukirchen Society at Lamu in 1887, and the Bethel Mission settled at Tanga in 1890. In 1888 a Bavarian Catholic body, the Benedictines of St. Ottilien, established themselves at Dar-es-Salaam and Pugu.<sup>1</sup> It is only, therefore, with the French Catholic Missions that this chapter is concerned.<sup>2</sup>

The first of these has already figured in these pages—the Black Fathers who occupied that questionable ‘barrack’ at Zanzibar in 1863.<sup>3</sup> In 1867, while retaining those spacious premises for a school and a hospital, they shifted their centre of operations to the mainland at Bagamoyo. Frere, it will be remembered, stayed a night there in 1873 and was much impressed by the work which Père Horner and his colleague, with five Brothers and four Sisters, were doing in maintaining and educating freed slaves and in bringing the neighbouring ‘bush’ under cultivation. ‘I would recommend it’, he wrote, ‘as a model to be followed in any attempt to civilise or evangelise Africa.’<sup>4</sup> But this fine pioneering effort was soon overshadowed by the great Catholic crusade which opened in 1878. In that year a pope was elected as Leo XIII who was deeply interested

<sup>1</sup> The Pugu station was destroyed in the Arab rebellion of 1889; see chap. XX, below.

<sup>2</sup> No adequate treatment of the missions can be attempted within the limits of this book. The most useful single volume on the subject is J. du Plessis' *The Evangelisation of Pagan Africa* (Capetown, 1929). Chapters II and III of D. J. Richter's *Tanganyika and its Future* (London, 1934) are useful. Students should also consult the records of such societies as the L.M.S., C.M.S. and U.M.C.A. and their published annals, e.g. R. Lovett, *History of the L.M.S.* (London, 1899), E. Stock, *History of the C.M.S.* (London, 1899) and G. H. Wilson, *History of the U.M.C.A.* (London, 1936).

<sup>3</sup> See pp. 33–4, above.

<sup>4</sup> Memorandum on the disposal of liberated slaves, 13. iv. 73: K.P. IIIa, 204–5. For Père Horner's notable career, see obituary notice (1880) in *P.R.G.S.*, n.s. ii. 514.

## THE BEGINNING OF THE SCRAMBLE

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in the reclamation of Africa, and immediately on his accession he authorised the creation of four African vicariates—Nyanza, Tanganyika and the northern and southern upper Congo. To take charge of them he chose Archbishop Lavigerie who for some time past had taken the lead among European churchmen in pleading the claims of Africa on the Christian conscience. Translated from Nancy to Algiers in 1867, he had first set himself to win the Moslems of North Africa to his faith,<sup>1</sup> so zealously that he was soon at odds with Governor-General MacMahon; but after 1870 he became more and more preoccupied by what was happening south of the Sahara. He was almost as much horrified by the explorers' accounts of the Slave Trade as if, like them, he had seen it at work himself. 'To save the interior of Africa', he said, 'we must kindle the anger of the world!' He believed and welcomed Leopold's assertion that the creation of the International Association was a step towards the abolition of the Trade;<sup>2</sup> and he accepted his new commission from the Pope with the same primary objective in his mind as had inspired Livingstone's later explorations. He acted quickly. In March 1878 ten missionaries set out for Zanzibar, five destined for Lake Victoria and five for Tanganyika. They left Bagamoyo in June and in August they reached Tabora. Thence the Tanganyika party proceeded to Ujiji where they were received 'in the kindest manner' by Hore, whose station had hitherto been the only station on the Lake. The Victoria party, diverging northwards from Tabora, arrived in due course in Uganda and established themselves at Mtesa's capital.<sup>3</sup> Meantime Lavigerie had dispatched a second expedition of twelve missionaries with six Papal Zouaves for their protection. Lavigerie preached to them before they started and in the course of the sermon he dwelt on the Slave Trade. 'It is very well', he said, 'to discuss theoretically the amount of injustice involved in buying and selling black men; but look at the Trade in practice, see the brutal cruelty it fosters in the masters, the depth of degradation and suffering to which it reduces the slaves, and you will agree

<sup>1</sup> Playfair, sometime consul at Zanzibar and now consul at Tunis, had the highest opinion of Lavigerie. 'We have St. Augustine amongst us again,' he said. R. F. Clarke, *Cardinal Lavigerie and the African Slave Trade* (London 1889), 115.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 129.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 133-45.



with me that one cry alone can ascend from human lips at the sight—a cry of horror and reprobation.’<sup>1</sup>

The story of the growth of the Catholic missions in Uganda side by side with the Protestant missions, of their personal triumphs and tragedies, and of the deplorable ‘religious war’ between their converts that ultimately developed lies far beyond the compass of this book. Here it must suffice to say that in this first stage of Lavigerie’s campaign four French stations were established in mid-East Africa—at Ujiji, at Rumongo about eighty miles farther up the east coast of the Lake, at Mpala, and at Ukumbi at the south end of Lake Victoria. The Rumongo station was attacked in 1881 by a band of Arabs who bitterly resented its opposition to the Slave Trade, and two of the four missionaries posted there were killed.<sup>2</sup> The Mpala station was in similar danger for the same reason, but it was protected by a certain Monsieur Joubert who, after holding a commission in the Papal Zouaves and then serving in the Franco-Prussian war, volunteered to help Lavigerie. He made himself a lonely home near Mpala where he raised and armed a force of 200 natives for the defence of the neighbouring villages and incidentally of the mission against the Arab ‘slavers’.<sup>3</sup>

The fiery spirit of Lavigerie throws a gleam of light among the shadows of the Scramble. He can stand by Livingstone, his passionate humanity unquestioned. And it was with the same purity of motive on the whole that their less famous followers, the men and women of the mission-stations, pursued their lonely and precarious calling. But few of the other Europeans who have figured in this chapter busied themselves with Africa for the Africans’ sake. And it is a strange, confused, ineffective picture their doings in Africa make—explorers, gun-runners, concession-hunters, sportsmen—moving peacefully among people who had never seen a white man or a gun or consummating their work of chastisement and thanking God—Belgians loyally serving Leopold’s good intentions in a desperately unsuitable spot, French and German traders in danger of

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, 149.

<sup>2</sup> Thomson, *op. cit.*, ii. 170.

<sup>3</sup> Du Plessis, *op. cit.*, 338. Joubert’s heroism was commended by Lavigerie in an address at St. Sulpice, Paris, in 1888: Clarke, *op. cit.*, 339.

their lives at Barawa and Tabora, Debaize blind and dying at Ujiji—the sniders and *chassepôts*, the buckshot and explosive bullets, the elephants in procession, the umbrellas, the hurdy-gurdy—and fluttering over it all the flags of Europe and America. Was this clumsy, unsystematic, wasteful, incompetent business the way to introduce the people of East Africa to the blessings of Western civilisation?

# XVI

## THE BRITISH OPPORTUNITY

1879-1884

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It is time to consider the British share in this first stage of the Scramble. For there was, of course, a British share. The breakdown of the Mackinnon concession did not mean that British interest in East Africa had faded out or that Belgians, Frenchmen and Germans were left in sole possession of the field. On the contrary, in missionary enterprise and in exploration as well as political influence the British maintained their lead.

### I

The first mission-station to be established in mid-East Africa after the expulsion of the Portuguese was the Church Missionary Society station at Rabai, founded by Krapf in 1844. In 1853 Krapf returned to Europe, leaving Rebmann, who had come out in 1846, in charge.<sup>1</sup> When Frere visited the station in 1873 he found Rebmann still at his post, with his invaluable dictionaries of the Nyasa, Nyika and Swahili languages completed, but broken in health and fast going blind.<sup>2</sup> In 1875 he at last went home to die in the following year. He was succeeded by the Rev. W. S. Price who started the settlement of Frere Town on the outskirts of Mombasa for the reception and training of slaves freed from the captured slave-ships.<sup>3</sup> An institution of this character was bound to be regarded with dislike and distrust by the Arabs of Mombasa, and on four occasions there was trouble. The riots of 1876 were mainly due to Barghash's

<sup>1</sup> See *East Africa and its Invaders*, chap. xiii.

<sup>2</sup> F. to Granville, 25. iii. 73; F.'s memo. on liberated slaves, 13. i. 73: K.P. IIIa, 151, 205.

<sup>3</sup> Euan Smith to Derby, 26. vii. 75: K.P. Va, 194.

drastic proclamation,<sup>1</sup> but the threatened attack on Frere Town was prompted by the Arabs' belief that Price was sheltering not freed slaves only but also runaways from lawful masters.<sup>2</sup> In 1877, when Price had left, the settlement was reported to be again in difficulties, and Kirk went himself to Mombasa to investigate. He found that there was no immediate danger from the Arabs, but that the new superintendent had completely failed to maintain discipline among the freed slaves.<sup>3</sup> In 1880 Kirk was obliged to intervene again. Yet another superintendent, J. R. Streeter, a layman, had brought the old trouble to a head by openly receiving runaways. As Kirk pointed out, 'Slavery being still the law of the land, the people of Mombasa had ample cause of complaint,' and he warned the missionaries of the hazardous course they were pursuing.<sup>4</sup> In 1881 Streeter's conduct in arresting and punishing townsmen for complicity in thefts of grain drew so vigorous a protest from the Sultan that a formal inquiry was made by Holmwood on Kirk's behalf and by Price on behalf of the C.M.S. Streeter, it was clear, had 'greatly exceeded his authority', and he was called home.<sup>5</sup>

Meantime the C.M.S. were extending their work inland. They founded stations at Mpwapwa in 1876, Mamboia and Uyui in 1879, Kambikeni in 1882, Msalala and Taita in 1883, Moshi in 1885, Taveta in 1886 and Nasa in 1887. In 1884 a new diocese of Eastern Equatorial Africa was created, and in July 1885 its first bishop, James Hannington, who had made the journey to Lake Victoria and back by way of Tabora in 1882-3, started from Mombasa for Uganda by the route which Joseph Thomson had followed in the previous year.<sup>6</sup> He knew—Thomson himself had warned him—that he was risking his life, but he was not afraid. On October 29 he and all but four of his fifty porters were put to death at Usoga by order of King Mwanga.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 225-6, 228-9, above.      <sup>2</sup> K. to Derby, 7. vi. 76: K.P. Vb, 516.

<sup>3</sup> K. to D., 30. iii. 77: K.P. VIa, 77.      <sup>4</sup> K. to G., 19. x. 80: K.P. VII. 529.

<sup>5</sup> K. to G., 20 and 21. vii. 81, enclosing Sultan's protest (24. vi. 81) and Holmwood's report (7. vii. 81); manuscript copy of Price's report to the C.M.S. (4. ii. 82): K.P. VIII, 277, 280, 293, 304. Kirk was sorry for Streeter and believed in his good intentions, but he agreed with Price that the climate had affected his head. In the light of these troublesome incidents Kirk had clearly been justified in rejecting the suggestion that vice-consular powers should be given to one of the Frere Town missionaries: K.P. Vb, 424.

<sup>6</sup> See pp. 368-70, below.

<sup>7</sup> E. C. Dawson, *James Hannington* (London, 1887), 443-4.

## THE BRITISH OPPORTUNITY

The next British mission in the field was that of the United Methodist Free Churches. Their station at Ribe near Mombasa was founded with Krapf's advice and aid in 1862,<sup>1</sup> and was managed by a remarkable pair of missionaries, Charles New and Thomas Wakefield. Frere visited them in 1873. If they would take a hint, he wrote, from the Black Fathers at Bagamoyo and give their converts a practical training in industry, Ribe might soon prove 'a great success'.<sup>2</sup> Besides their missionary labours they made valuable contributions to geographical knowledge. New's climb to the snow-line on Kilimanjaro has already been recorded. He paid another visit to the mountain in 1874-5, and died on his way back.<sup>3</sup> Wakefield's explorations were nearer home. His most important journey (1877) was from Ribe through the Galla country between the Rivers Tana and Sabaki and back to Malindi.<sup>4</sup> In 1887 he retired after no less than twenty-five years' service. In 1884 a second Methodist station was founded at Golbanti on the River Tana.<sup>5</sup>

Third in order of entry into the East African field was the Universities' Mission to Central Africa, which had been associated from the outset with the episcopate of Central Africa. In 1864 Bishop Tozer withdrew its first outpost in the Shiré Highlands and settled in Zanzibar. In 1868 he resumed the attack on the mainland and planted a station at Magila in Usambara with the permission of king Kimweri.<sup>6</sup> More than once it had to be abandoned owing to the death or illness of its occupants, but in 1873 it was re-established by the Rev. J. P. Farler.<sup>7</sup> One of his earliest acts was to arbitrate and make peace between two major chiefs who had taken advantage of the disorders following on Kimweri's death to fight an old feud out in open

<sup>1</sup> See *East Africa and its Invaders*, 408.

<sup>2</sup> Frere to Granville, 25. iii. 73: K.P. IIIa, 151.

<sup>3</sup> P.R.G.S. series i, xix. 389: cf. Thomson, *Through Masai Land*, 4.

<sup>4</sup> P.R.G.S. n.s. i. 685; iv. 368-72. *Geographical Journal*, xix. 224-5. Wakefield found reason to doubt the truth of Brenner's account of his travels in the Sabaki district, and his doubts were confirmed by a subsequent conversation with Fischer.

<sup>5</sup> The first occupant of this station was a West-African from Sierra Leone, named Düring. The second, Houghton, was murdered with his wife by Masai in 1886: F. Jackson, 106.

<sup>6</sup> For Kimweri's desire for a mission in 1848, see *East Africa and its Invaders*, 395.

<sup>7</sup> See pp. 328-9, above, and chap. XVII, below.

warfare.<sup>1</sup> In 1873 Bishop Tozer resigned the bishopric and was succeeded in 1874 by the Rev. Edward Steere who had worked under him at Zanzibar for the previous ten years. On Steere's death in 1882 the Rev. C. A. Smythies was appointed to the diocese. On Christmas Day, 1873, Colonel Prideaux laid the foundation stone of Christ Church cathedral which was opened for worship in 1877 and completed in 1879. It was built on the site of the old slave-market, and its altar stands where the whipping-post once stood. The Sultan presented a clock for the tower.<sup>2</sup> Meantime the work on the mainland was extending. Offshoots of Magila were planted at Pambili in 1876 and Umba in 1877, and in the same year the invasion of a new area was begun with a station at Masasi, some miles inland from Lindi, under the Rev. Chauncy Maples, afterwards Bishop of Likoma, and another at Newala, some fifty miles south of Masasi, under the Rev. H. H. Clarke. In 1878 Clarke took on Farler's rôle as peacemaker. At a *baraza* on the banks of the Rovuma he brought about a triple pact between warring bands of Fiti and Kua and representatives of the Sultan. The tribesmen promised to stop raiding each other's villages for slaves, to submit their quarrels to the Sultan's agent, and to permit the building of a road which Barghash was then contemplating along the coast.<sup>3</sup> In 1882 the station at Masasi was attacked by a band of raiders from the south, who captured some of the converts. This raised the question which Bishop Mackenzie had had to face in the Shiré Highlands:<sup>4</sup> Ought missionaries to fight? They answered it differently from Mackenzie, and the station was abandoned for a time.<sup>5</sup> In 1885 more new ground was broken by the founding of a station at Likoma on Lake Nyasa.

The London Missionary Society first sent an expedition to East Africa in 1877. It was led by the Rev. Roger Price and it made the interesting experiment of using bullocks for transporting baggage from the coast to Ujiji. Like the elephants, however, the bullocks proved a failure, succumbing to the

<sup>1</sup> G. H. Wilson, 41-2.

<sup>2</sup> A. E. M. Anderson-Morshead, *History of the U.M.C.A.* (London, 1897), 95.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 133-4.

<sup>4</sup> See *Kirk on the Zambesi*, 197.

<sup>5</sup> G. H. Wilson, 56-8.

climate and the tse-tse fly. Price accordingly turned back to the coast with a view to persuading his chiefs in London to establish a number of stations on the inland road instead of pressing on at once to the Lake. When he had gone, however, the other members of the party, now led by the Rev. J. B. Thomson, decided to continue their journey in two parties, and in August 1878 they reached Ujiji. Almost at once Thomson fell ill and died. Six months later the second party under the Rev. A. W. Dodgshun arrived, but within a week he too was dead. The charge of the new station devolved on Edward Coode Hore, a master mariner, who had resigned his employment in the P. and O. to become a lay member of the mission. Early in 1879 Dr. Mullins, the Society's Foreign Secretary, went out in charge of a second expedition. He died at Mpwapwa, and Dr. E. J. Southon, taking command, continued the journey through Tabora to Mirambo's 'capital', Urambo, where he himself remained,<sup>1</sup> while his lieutenant, the Rev. W. Griffith, went on to found a station at Mtowa in Uguha on the further side of Lake Tanganyika. A third expedition reached Ujiji in 1880, but its leader, the Rev. A. J. Wookey, was soon driven away home in broken health by the damp, malarious climate of the lakeside which had so dangerously enfeebled Livingstone and so swiftly killed Debaize, Thomson and Dodgshun. The transference of the station from Ujiji to Kavalla Island in 1885 was a wise, if tardy, move.

In 1881 Hore went home on leave and returned at the head of the fourth L.M.S. expedition in 1882, reaching Ujiji in the following year. He had already taken to his seaman's element by the purchase from a Swahili merchant of a large trading canoe which he fitted with masts and rigging and named *Calabash*; and now a galvanised steel lifeboat, *Morning Star*, equipped with sails and oars, was brought out from England and carried up in sections to Ujiji. An auxiliary sailing canoe, *Satellite*, was acquired in 1883 and another native boat, *Dawn of Day*, in 1884. In 1885 the flotilla was completed by the launching of *Good News*, the first steamship to float on Lake Tanganyika.<sup>2</sup> Innocent as its purpose was, the creation of this

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 261, 263-4, above. Southon died in 1882.

<sup>2</sup> It took time to bring up and fix the engines, and *Good News* did not get up steam till the autumn of 1887.

little missionary navy did more for British prestige throughout the Tanganyika area than all Karema could do for Leopold. It 'flew the flag' all up and down the lake. 'I think it may well continue a sphere of British *influence*', wrote Hore in 1892, 'not as private possession or territory, but to secure its free and open use to any who have the skill and enterprise to navigate it for lawful purposes.'<sup>1</sup> It is clear, indeed, that Hore, who retired in 1888, was one of the outstanding personalities in that mixed company of Europeans who were 'scrambling' over East Africa at this time. He seems to have occupied at remote Ujiji something like the position occupied by Kirk at Zanzibar. His hospitality, his advice, and such medical skill as he possessed were always at the disposal of inexperienced or ailing strangers—travellers of all nationalities, missionaries of any persuasion. He corresponded regularly with Kirk who so far trusted him as to get him appointed his consular agent on the Lake.<sup>2</sup>

Taken as a whole, the activities of the four British missionary societies stand out from the blurred, confusing picture as a relatively well-organised and relatively successful business. Disease, not ignorance or incompetence, was their worst enemy; and in this East African death-trap as in 'the white man's grave' in the West the most striking thing about them was their fearlessness. In one case it was foolhardiness. In 1881 a young missionary enthusiast, named William Cruickshank, arrived at Zanzibar intent on making his way to Manyema by himself and settling there on his own without contact with any organised mission. He seemed strong and healthy, Kirk reported, but he knew no African language and had read little about Africa. Despite all Kirk could do to dissuade him, he set off alone from the coast. He had no servants or porters, no change of clothes, no means of cooking such food as he might beg, no medicine, only a bundle on his shoulder and a few dollars in his pocket. He died in the Mamboia district about a hundred miles from the coast.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Tanganyika* (as cited in next footnote), 111.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 231, above. Hore's work deserves a monograph. His own account of his eleven years' service in East Africa (*Tanganyika*, London, 1892) needs supplementing from his letters in the archives at the L.M.S. headquarters in London and from Kirk's dispatches.

<sup>3</sup> K. to Granville, 28. vi. and 26. viii. 81: K.P. VIII. 276, 309.



Next to the British missionaries of this period come the British explorers or rather explorer—a great explorer, entitled not only by his principal achievement of exploration but also by his remarkable personal qualities, his courage, humanity and good judgment, to take rank with the more famous figures of the previous period. Born in Dumfriesshire in 1858, Joseph Thomson grew into his ‘teens’ when Livingstone’s reputation was at its height. He made him his youth’s hero and read all about him and about Africa that he could find; and when in due course he went to Edinburgh to study geology and mineralogy—he worked under Geikie and attended a ‘sublime’ course of lectures by Huxley—his mind was still set on Africa. His chance soon came. The cautious, if somewhat insular, attitude which the Royal Geographical Society had adopted towards the International Association had not implied a loss of interest in African exploration. An African committee had been formed, corresponding to the ‘national committees’ on the continent, and in 1878 an expedition was organised, with a grant of £1500, to make another attack on Central Africa. Keith Johnston, an able young geologist of 34, whose book on the ‘Lake Regions’, published in 1870, had been praised by Livingstone himself, was to take command. His instructions were to examine the country between Dar-es-Salaam and Lake Nyasa mainly with a view to discovering a practicable route for the completion of the ‘Mackinnon Road’, and, if his stores were not exhausted on arrival at the Lake, he was to continue his explorations northwards to Lake Tanganyika. As soon as Thomson heard of this expedition he volunteered to join it in any capacity and with no pay beyond expenses. His offer was accepted, and on January 5, 1879, he and his chief arrived at Zanzibar.<sup>1</sup>

Several weeks were needed for the hiring of porters and the equipment of the caravan during which they made a trial trip to Usambara, and it was not till May 19 that they started up the

<sup>1</sup> J. B. Thomson, *Joseph Thomson, African Explorer* (London, 1897), chaps. i–iv; J. Thomson, *To the Central African Lakes and Back* (London, 1881), i. 2–3. Thomson pays a warm tribute to Kirk’s and Mrs. Kirk’s hospitality at Zanzibar. He writes of their four children looking ‘as vigorous and lively as if they had never been out of England, and yet they had never left Zanzibar where they were born’: *ibid.*, 11.

road from Dar-es-Salaam with 150 porters and with Livingstone's Chuma as their guide. Presently they diverged south-westwards to the Rufiji valley, and there, at Behobeho, on June 28 Johnston, who was ill when he started, died of dysentery and malaria. A weaker man than Thomson might have turned back to the coast, but he decided to take command, though he was only 21, and push on alone to Lake Nyasa. He reached it near its northern end in the last week of September. It had been hard going across the barren plateau of Mahenge and the mountains near the Lake; and a road along that line was clearly impracticable; but otherwise the young explorer's introduction to African travel had been unusually successful. He had had little trouble with his porters—mainly, he asserts, owing to a lavish use of Kirk's name—and less with the natives. 'We passed in peace through every tribe.' Nor did he meet with any serious difficulty in carrying out the second part of Johnston's instructions. On November 3 he reached Lake Tanganyika, and at the new year (1880) he was with Hore at Ujiji. After a short rest, though the work allotted to the expedition had now been done, he crossed the Lake and began to explore the Urua country. Like Livingstone in neighbouring Manyema, he found the natives' experience of Arab 'slavers' had made them suspicious and unfriendly, and twice he was in grave danger. On the first occasion he quietly 'walked up and down without a gun' in front of 'the yelling savages . . . aiming their arrows or poisoning their spears as if about to throw them'; and after an hour or so, with the help of the chief, the tumult was stilled. It was the same on the second occasion. 'We remained calm but determined; and the savages, after dancing about us for several hours, gradually became quieter and began to disperse.'<sup>1</sup> In March he was back at Ujiji whence he paid the visit to Karema recorded in the preceding chapter. During this stay with Hore he had another narrow escape. In the course of an excursion on the lake they had beached their boat in a cove—the scene recalls Bumbire—when suddenly they found themselves surrounded by a body of natives who believed, so it was afterwards discovered, that the white men had stolen one of their slaves. Spears were poised and arrows drawn, but Hore and Thomson kept their heads. Hore 'sat up in the boat

<sup>1</sup> *To the Central African Lakes*, ii. 133-4, 162-3.

and began lighting his pipe'. Thomson 'went forward among the warriors and examined their arms with curiosity'. The puzzled natives hesitated. The moment of hot blood passed. Presently there were friendly explanations.<sup>1</sup>

In April Thomson at last set off for the coast by way of Tabora, and on July 19 Kirk reported his arrival at Zanzibar.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps the most striking feature of the whole expedition was one that appeared at its close. Thomson had brought back 149 of his 150 porters.<sup>3</sup>

In the autumn Thomson was back in Scotland,<sup>4</sup> but he did not stay there long. In the course of his disappointing ascent of the River Rovuma in 1862,<sup>5</sup> Livingstone had seen what he thought were lumps of coal, and from that and other evidence he had surmised the probable existence of a great coal-field between the Rovuma and the Zambesi.<sup>6</sup> Barghash, it seems, had heard of this, and soon after his accession he dispatched first an Arab and then a Parsi engineer to the spot. They both returned with promising reports. 'His Highness had only to make a little preliminary outlay and presently his coffers would be swelling with a great return.' But before committing himself Barghash consulted Kirk who naturally recommended him to obtain the opinion of an expert mineralogist. What about Thomson?<sup>7</sup> In the spring of 1881, accordingly, Thomson was invited to return to Zanzibar as the Sultan's official geologist with the special duty of reporting on the coal; and in July he started from Mikindani with Chuma and seventy porters and struck across country to the Rovuma valley, and thence up the Lujenda to the scene of Livingstone's find near Mount Makanje some 120 miles from the sea. The stuff that Livingstone had seen was there, but it was not coal in a strict or profitable sense. There were layers of bituminous shale which would burn in a wood fire but not by itself, and there was a small amount of a substance like anthracite that would scarcely burn at all. Further

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 201-2.

<sup>2</sup> K. to Granville, 19. vii. 80; K.P. VII. 473.

<sup>3</sup> Thomson, *op. cit.*, ii. 268.

<sup>4</sup> In the course of this visit home Thomson made the acquaintance of J. M. Barrie, who became one of his closest friends. They went for a tour on the continent in 1889. *Joseph Thomson*, 75, 241. Tribute by Barrie, 325.

<sup>5</sup> See *Kirk on the Zambesi*, 240-6.

<sup>6</sup> *Narrative of an Expedition to the Zambesi* (London, 1865), 427, 439.

<sup>7</sup> *Joseph Thomson*, 77-8.

prospecting and repeated experiments yielded no better results, and in November Thomson was back at Zanzibar with empty hands. Barghash was bitterly disappointed. He seems, indeed, to have imagined that Thomson was lying. He refused to see him, and when Thomson, aware that he was not likely to be sent to the mainland again, proposed the cancellation of his two years' appointment, Barghash promptly assented.<sup>1</sup>

So Thomson was home again early in 1882, but again he was not long left idle. At the end of the year the Royal Geographical Society commissioned him to undertake that one major task of East African exploration still unattempted—the crossing of the Kenya Highlands. He was provided with a grant of £3000 and instructed to ascertain 'if a practicable direct route for European travellers exists through the Masai country from any one of the East African ports to Victoria Nyanza'.<sup>2</sup> In January 1883 he was back at Zanzibar where he learned that Fischer had left Pangani only a month earlier, bound also for the Highlands. Partly because he was anxious to avoid following in Fischer's tracks, he chose Mombasa for his starting point, and on March 15 he left Rabai with 115 porters. He made straight for the slopes of Kilimanjaro by Taita and Taveta, and at Moshi he met Mandara who was 'evidently intelligent' and insisted on being 'given' some of the most valuable of Thomson's goods.<sup>3</sup> Proceeding from Moshi round the south-west flank of the mountain, he discovered that after all he had got on to Fischer's path, and he soon heard of his trouble with the Masai. When he first came into touch with them himself, he found them arrogant indeed and quick to take offence but not unreasonable. Their elders after some deliberation agreed to let him pass. But, as he marched farther northwards, he became aware of gathering hostility; and at a point due west of the mountain-top he decided to retreat. Striking camp in the middle of the night and stealing through the 'bush', he made his way back to Taveta. Not unnaturally he had more trouble with his porters at this stage than at any period of his first expedition. So terrified were they of the Masai that they almost mutinied. But Thomson's firmness and tact restored their morale—they gave very little

<sup>1</sup> *Joseph Thomson*, 79–86. Miles to Granville, 17. xii. 81: K.P. IX. 146.

<sup>2</sup> J. Thomson, *Through Masai Land* (2nd ed., London, n.d.), 6.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 76, 82–4.

trouble thereafter—and in July he made a second start for ‘Masai Land’.<sup>1</sup> This time he skirted the north-east side of Kili-manjaro and then struck north-west and north towards the Highlands. Now and throughout his journey through Masai country he was in constant danger. Any little quarrel with the lordly young *m-moran* or warriors might mean bloodshed, and, if the band was a big one, the massacre of all his party. Indeed he might not have survived if he had not posed as a great white *laibon* or medicine-man. His most effective ‘turn’ was the preparation of a magic liquid. After prolonged concoction and incantation he signalled for a gun to be fired and at the same instant dropped a spoonful of Eno’s fruit salts into the mixture. It effervesced, and the watching warriors recoiled in astonishment and apprehension. Another impressive act of wizardry was the removal and re-insertion of his two false teeth.<sup>2</sup> But despite the prestige Thomson thus acquired, he was obliged to put up with every kind of personal liberty. Sturdy young warriors, spears in hand, pushed into his tent, fingered all his belongings, and insisted on satisfying their curiosity about everything. ‘Take off your boots.’ ‘Show your toes.’ ‘Let us see your white skin.’ On one occasion a warrior, who had seen the tooth-trick, seized Thomson’s nose and tugged it hard to see if that, too, could be taken on and off.<sup>3</sup> The elders, however, were more restrained and dignified, and Thomson managed to keep on friendly terms with them; but it was a relief to get through the Masai grazing grounds and reach the villages of the Kikuyu, a competent and high-spirited people but not so fiercely scornful as the Masai of all lesser breeds of men. At last, in September, Thomson arrived at Lake Naivasha where he heard of Fischer’s retreat in the previous summer. Pushing on northwards, he passed and named the Aberdare Mountains<sup>4</sup> and the Thomson Falls, and reached the foothills of Mount Kenya. In this district he was in touch with another group of Masai and their wandering herds; and finding that his prestige was wearing dangerously

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, 129.

<sup>2</sup> Readers of *King Solomon’s Mines* will recall Captain Good’s adoption of this device. D. C. Haggard, British vice-consul at Lamu, was Rider Haggard’s brother; and the background of some of the well-known African romances was taken from East Africa, not South.

<sup>3</sup> *Through Masai Land*, 194, 206, 225.

<sup>4</sup> Lord Aberdare was President of the R.G.S. at this time.

thin—'fruit salt and a couple of artificial teeth were no longer novelties'—he broke away again by night, and at the end of October 'discovered' Lake Baringo.<sup>1</sup> The next and last stage of his task, the passage of Elgeyo and the Nandi and Kavirondo country to Lake Victoria, seemed likely to be the most dangerous; for three trading caravans had recently been cut up in that neighbourhood. But the journey, as it turned out, was relatively uneventful. At one village Thomson's advance was obstructed and there was a tussle with the natives, but he got away without using his guns; and in the second week of December he sighted the gleaming lake from the brow of a hill, and was soon 'joyously drinking deep draughts' of its waters.<sup>2</sup>

Thomson was tempted to continue his journey to the Nile, but he got news of a native war ahead of him; his stock of goods was running perilously low, and he was suffering himself from a sharp attack of fever: so he reluctantly turned northwards towards Mount Elgon and then eastwards back to Lake Baringo. Thence in February 1884 he set out for the coast. He was still, of course, in danger. A few days before he left a native guide sought refuge in his camp, the sole survivor of a caravan that had been destroyed in Elgeyo. But his worst enemy was now disease. He nearly died of dysentery at Naivasha, and again, on the brink of the Highlands, he was desperately ill. Soon, moreover, all his stores were exhausted, and, when he reached the Nyika by way of Machakos and Tsavo he found that inhospitable country in the grip of famine. It was 'a skin bag drawn tightly over a skeleton' that stumbled at last into Rabai.<sup>3</sup>

On June 11 Kirk wrote to report his arrival at Zanzibar. His expedition, he said, had been 'most successful'. 'Now the road is known, travellers and traders will find less difficulty in passing, and we may hope soon'—again a prophetic note—'to see a new through-route established of which Mombasa will be the coast port.'<sup>4</sup>

The most notable feature of Thomson's career in Africa—and it was the same with all the great British explorers—was his conduct towards the native peoples. Before his early death

<sup>1</sup> *Through Masai Land*, 225.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 292.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 332-40.

<sup>4</sup> K. to Granville, 11. vi. 84: K.P. Xb, 196.

in 1895 he undertook two more expeditions in Africa, up the Niger and overland to Sokoto in 1885 and in Northern Rhodesia, as it was to be, in 1890-1; and from first to last he never killed an African. One other point should not be overlooked—his disbelief in the wealth of Central Africa and his distaste for the economic aspects of the Scramble. In his book on his first expedition he did his best to tone down the rosy pictures of the earlier explorers. On the coastal lowlands, he admitted, there might be 'a great future in cotton, sugar, oil, cereals of various kinds, cloves, coffee, and a variety of vegetable products. But for the interior, with its barren deserts and dreary steppes, its tracts of "bush" and its unprofitable mountains, there seems to be little of hope or promise.' Away in distant Katanga there was copper, but in mid-East Africa he had seen no trace of minerals of any sort in payable deposits. There was little rubber in the interior and no gum-copal. The only valuable product was ivory, and there would soon be little left, it seemed, of the herds of elephants which twenty years earlier had been roaming far and wide. 'Central Africa is doubtless ready enough to take whatever England likes to send but she has nothing to give in return.'<sup>1</sup> When the Scottish Geographical Society was inaugurated in 1884 with a lecture by Stanley on the economic prospects of West Africa, he expressed his dismay at the manner in which 'the iron heel of commerce' was trampling out the better side of African travel. 'If this sort of thing is to go on, I should prefer to go to the North Pole.'<sup>2</sup> In 1886, in an address to the new Society, he pointed out that East Africa had no Niger and no Congo and that, where its land was fertile, its climate was usually pestilential.<sup>3</sup> If he overstated his case, it was at any rate a useful corrective of overstatements on the other side.

## 3

Neither in missionary enterprise, then, nor in exploration had the intervention of other Europeans deprived the British of their old-established lead in East Africa. Still less, of course,

<sup>1</sup> *To the Central African Lakes*, ii. 281-6.

<sup>2</sup> *Joseph Thomson*, 132.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 165-6. Presumably Thomson considered the Kilimanjaro and Kenya highlands relatively healthy, but they form, of course, a very small part of East Africa as a whole.

was their political ascendancy at Zanzibar in question. The international scramble had so far been conducted by individuals or committees or societies; and, if economic or political objectives came occasionally to light—a monopoly, a colony, a port—they were never backed by Governments. And for that there was good reason. A monopoly would undo the accepted economic status of the Zanzibar dominions as a field of 'equal opportunity' for the traders of all nations. A colony or a port would violate their political integrity. On both points the attitude of the British Government was well known; and no other Government was prepared as yet to challenge it. France, it is true, was also involved. The Declaration of 1862 had bound her as much as Britain to respect the independence of the Sultan's realm. But, in so far as the Declaration implied that the French position at Zanzibar was equal with the British, it was more a matter of form than of fact. From the beginning of official contact between Europe and Zanzibar British influence had been supreme. The attempt to oust it in 1859 had conspicuously failed. And the French Government, as has been seen, though still interested in East Africa, were not now pressing their claims there against British claims, however strained Anglo-French relations might be in other parts of the world. They were thinking more of Madagascar and the Comoros. Thus, to all intents and purposes, the fate of East Africa lay in Britain's hands.

Kirk knew that, but he had now begun to ask himself how long it would be so. The British position might not yet be challenged, but it was plainly threatened by the new European interest in East Africa and the new inroads into the interior. The first way to meet that threat was also plain—as plain now as it had been in the days of the Egyptian invasion. The British guarantee of the Zanzibar dominions must be strictly and firmly upheld. It might be doubtful where their western frontier lay, but that was a minor matter. The Sultan's authority was unquestioned on the coast, and the coast sterilised, so to speak, the whole interior, since any conceivable project for its exploitation, economic or political, required for its execution an outlet to the sea. Integrity, then, was the first watchword, but it must be complete integrity or nothing. One breach in its sea-front, and the whole edifice would be undermined.



This old negative policy, however, was no longer quite sufficient. The interior was in process of being 'opened-up'. It was impossible to prevent it. The right of trade and residence possessed by British, Americans, Frenchmen and Germans under treaty could not fairly be withheld from Belgians or anyone else. Nor was 'opening-up' a bad thing in itself. An orderly development of the interior—the maintenance of peace, the final elimination of slave-raiding, the improvement of communications, the growth of new and better crops, the increase of trade—all that, if properly organized and controlled, would benefit the peoples of the interior on the one hand and the Sultan's revenues on the other as much as the parties responsible for the execution of such a programme. But nothing like that was happening in those critical years. As Kirk watched the beginnings of the Scramble, party after party plunging inland from the coast, seeking only, it seemed, an isolated foothold here and there in the vast interior, possessing neither authority, nor capacity, nor power to carry out any systematic policy for the administration or advancement of the country, he must have more and more keenly regretted the collapse of Mackinnon's plan. At the close of the far-sighted dispatch in which he intimated the results that were likely to accrue from the operations of the International Association, he allowed himself a little outburst of long pent-up feeling, such as he normally reserved for his private correspondence. 'It is, I think, to be regretted that this enterprise should have been left so exclusively to other nations. . . . It is a disgrace that no British company should have stepped in before this time to share the chance of success and reap the advantages that must attend those who are first in the field.'<sup>1</sup> Nor was Kirk troubled only by a natural impatience at the slowness of his fellow countrymen to grasp their opportunity. He was beginning to think that, if they delayed much longer, it would be difficult to keep the opportunity alive. If Britain continued indefinitely to neglect the work that needed doing in East Africa, might not other nations ask why they should not be allowed to do it?

Kirk could only hope that time would be given for the development of a more active and constructive British policy. All he could do, meanwhile, was to miss no chance, as far as he

<sup>1</sup> K. to Salisbury, 8. iii. 80: K.P. VII. 424.

could help it, of reinforcing the old policy of assisting the Sultan to maintain and extend his authority. And, as it happened, there were four such chances after the Mackinnon fiasco, one in each of the next four years.

The first came early in 1879 and arose from the murder of the missionary Penrose in Unyamwezi in the previous December<sup>1</sup>—a tragic demonstration of the danger Europeans ran in the interior and of the Sultan's inability to protect them, even eastwards of Tabora, despite the fact that they had obtained his formal assent to their enterprise and carried his 'passport'. It has already been observed that such incidents were bound to weaken his claim to include any substantial part of the interior within his dominions, and Barghash was greatly perturbed by the news of Penrose's death. 'I happen to know', wrote Kirk, 'that this occurrence has caused Seyyid Barghash the very greatest anxiety, and, although he has not as yet communicated with me, I have reason to think he is prepared to take any course that may be needed and place the administration of the interior in the hands of a European officer, providing for the expense of a settled government along the main lines of trade.'<sup>2</sup>

But the Foreign Office did not take the hint, and its restraint is worth observing. For if British 'imperialism' in the nineteenth century had been as grasping and unscrupulous as is often represented, the murder of a British missionary would have provided an admirable excuse for forcible intervention. When a young French naval officer on a scientific expedition was murdered some eighty miles inland in 1845, the commandant of the French squadron at Réunion went at once to Zanzibar and demanded the arrest and execution of the murderers; and when Seyyid Said equivocated and procrastinated, he was compelled to take action by the threat that, if he did not take it, the French navy would.<sup>3</sup> In that case Said could and did send troops to the scene of the murder; but the killers of Penrose were beyond Barghash's reach. It was easy enough, then, for the British Government, if they had wished, to take advantage of the incident, especially when they learned of Barghash's reaction. But they did nothing. The hint was ignored.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 263, above.

<sup>2</sup> K. to Salisbury, 5. i. 79: K.P. Vc, 42.

<sup>3</sup> See *East Africa and its Invaders*, 353-6.

The second chance links on to the first. In 1880, as has been related, Gordon suggested to Kirk that the Sultan should appoint a British Governor-General to administer his dominions on the mainland; and shortly afterwards Kirk told the Foreign Office that, if Gordon himself would accept such a task, it would be 'undoubtedly good for the country'.<sup>1</sup> Here was another opening. Granville could have instructed Kirk to recommend the project to Barghash. Certainly under pressure, probably without it, Barghash would have assented. Had he not contemplated just such a plan a year before? Then, if Gordon, who at that moment was unemployed, had been willing, the thing could have been done.

The third chance came in 1881 when Kirk, as has been seen, suggested that, as a means of putting an end to the ceaseless strife between the inland Arabs and Mirambo, a line near Tabora should be recognised as the limit of the Sultan's dominions in the interior and that beyond that line Mirambo should be recognised as an independent ruler.<sup>2</sup> Such action would have committed the British Government to maintaining the integrity of Barghash's territory as far as the new frontier, and would have brought it into a special, almost a protective, relationship with Mirambo. For those very reasons Kirk's proposal was rejected. Though it meant that British interests in East Africa would be strengthened, though it involved no danger or expense, the Government refused to accept any new responsibility.

The last chance was the most substantial and the most attractive of the four. It arose out of the difficult question of the succession to the Sultanate. In the course of the inquiry which led to the separation of Zanzibar from Muscat by Lord Canning's arbitration in 1861 it was recognised that according to Omani custom the ruler was appointed not by any dynastic right but solely by the choice of the people—a choice that was usually determined by the force of the successful candidate's disposal. At Zanzibar, therefore, as at Muscat, a Sultan's death was bound to be the signal for an outbreak of Arab factiousness which, if unchecked by some superior authority, might easily end in civil war. Said's death had been followed by Thwain's plan

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 297-9, above.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 265, above.

to invade and annex Zanzibar and by Barghash's rebellion. Both had been thwarted by British intervention; and without British backing Barghash's accession would almost certainly have been challenged by the el-Harthi, if not by Turki.<sup>1</sup> As Kirk tersely put it, 'the succession may be said to have been, failing other law, in the hands of the British consulate'.<sup>2</sup> Clearly it would promote the peace of Zanzibar if some 'other law' were established. Coghlan had suggested in 1861 that an 'arrangement' should be made for the future succession,<sup>3</sup> and Kirk had raised the question with Majid. But Majid, 'having no male children and being at variance with all his brothers, had no personal interest in the matter'. 'The longest sword', he said, would win the throne on his death. On Barghash's accession Kirk tried again, but found his views on the 'unwelcome subject' the same as Majid's. Before very long, however, Barghash became the father of 'a large family of sons and daughters', and, writing to Lord Derby in 1878, Kirk reported that 'his feelings have undergone an entire change'. 'I believe it will now be possible for us to define the succession and thereby confer an immense benefit on the country: for the death of a Sultan is now looked forward to as a constant danger, only less than a revolution. . . . We have now, I think, a favourable opportunity of benefiting the country and greatly strengthening British influence by settling in the form of a secret treaty the manner in which the Sultan's children should be considered the legal heirs to the throne. . . . This would in all probability lead to a regency under British supervision, the Sultan being, I consider, a poor life and his sons still very young.' The occasion might be used, Kirk added, to secure some definite undertakings for the gradual extinction of Slavery.<sup>4</sup>

This idea elicited no response from the Foreign Office, but it remained alive and active in Barghash's mind till in 1881 he himself on his own initiative made a definite offer to the British Government—an offer which virtually put the succession at their disposal and gave them, as Kirk had predicted, the control of the Regency. The deed he drew up is of such historical importance that the English translation of its Arabic text must be given in full.

<sup>1</sup> See chap. V, above.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 30, above.

<sup>2</sup> K. to D., 3. v. 78: K.P. VIb, 381.

<sup>4</sup> K. to D., 3. v. 78: K.P. VIb, 381.

## THE BRITISH OPPORTUNITY

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'This is my will regarding the succession to the Government of Zanzibar and its dependencies.

In the name of God.

'From Barghash-bin-Said, be it known to those who may see this that, finding it for the public good to make an arrangement for the government of Zanzibar after my death and to remove any doubt and dispute, my wish and intention is that the British Government shall promise the throne of Zanzibar and its dependencies to the eldest of my sons and after him to his son, should he leave one, and so on in like manner; and the British Government shall be guardian to them until they come of age. And regarding the man we may name as Regent during the minority of our son, our wish is that in the event of his doing anything to the injury of the Kingdom or the disadvantage of our son it shall be for the Great Government to remove him at their discretion and to place in his stead one of their choice, and so to do until the coming to the years of wisdom of our son, which when he shall reach the government shall be delivered to him. The full meaning of this is that the Great Government shall act for us in everything, should God cause anything to come upon us before our sons are of age. And in this we invoke the help of God. And Salaam.

Written by my hand,  
30 Ramadan, 1298.<sup>1</sup>

If proof were needed of the trust which Barghash had come to feel in the good faith of the British Government, this remarkable document would furnish it. Had the offer been accepted, it would have meant the prospective assumption of a British protectorate over Zanzibar. All the Sultan's claims on the mainland would have become, indirectly but effectively, British claims; and the agents of other European nations, seeking to obtain concessions or establish posts or found colonies on the coast or in the interior, would have known that in all that area Britain had assumed an official interest and obligation. Thus, by no act of 'imperialistic' usurpation but at the unsolicited request of the legitimate sovereign of the country, Zanzibar

<sup>1</sup> August 26, 1881. Copy enclosed in Granville to Miles, 19. vi. 82: K.P. IX. 205. Kirk, who was going home on leave, was entrusted with the document by Barghash for presentation to Granville.

would have acquired a new political stability, freed from recurrent periods of uncertainty and strife, and the mainland—as far as the Great Lakes, it is safe to say—would have fallen for good or ill to British guardianship.

An interesting proposition, to say the least, and a very cheap one. It required no increase in the existing British personnel at Zanzibar, no advance in their existing status. The importance of Kirk's post had been recognised by its conversion into a Consul-Generalship in 1873, and his own personal qualifications by the bestowal of the C.M.G. in 1879 and the K.C.M.G. in 1881.<sup>1</sup> Other changes, now under discussion, were to come into effect in 1883, when Kirk became primarily the servant of the British Government, who now alone would be responsible for the appointment and payment of the consul-general and political agent, and only in quite a minor degree the servant of the Government of India with whom he would only correspond in future on matters concerning British Indians 'having no political character'.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, once so understaffed and overworked, he was now to be assisted by a consul, Holmwood to wit, and five vice-consuls, three of them stationed on the coast at Lamu, Mombasa and Kilwa. The acceptance, therefore, of Barghash's offer, the establishment of something akin to a protectorate, would not have involved a call for any more men or any more money. Nor would it have implied any new activity on Kirk's part, any new policy, any new functions. The succession, as he had pointed out, had been decided in the past and would presumably in any case be decided in the future by the British Government—and so would all other questions on which they were determined enough to have their way. The

<sup>1</sup> K.P. *misc.*

<sup>2</sup> On the last occasion on which the Government of India exercised their power of appointment, Kirk's advice was ignored. In 1881 he was warned that his health required him to take two years' leave in England, and he recommended that Holmwood should be chosen to act in his place on the ground that he was familiar with the work and *persona grata* with the Sultan. Though he pointed out that the work at independent Zanzibar with its little *corps* of foreign consuls was different from that in which the political agents of the Government of India were normally engaged, the rule of the service was applied, and Colonel Miles was transferred from Muscat—not, as has been seen (pp. 232–3, above) with the happiest results. K. to Sir A. Lyall, 5. v. 81: L. to K., 18. vii. 81: K.P. VIII. 302. Arrangements in 1883: F.O. to K., 19. vii. 83: K.P. Xa, 148–9.

only real change, in fact, in the present situation would be that the British Government would not only have re-affirmed the responsibility which they had hitherto shared with the French Government for maintaining the integrity of the Zanzibar dominions, but they would also have assumed a new responsibility for their good government: for that is what their power to dismiss the Regent and appoint another would imply. But that change would have been of the highest practical importance. It would have given Zanzibar a better safeguard than it had ever yet possessed against faction within and aggression from without. And to Kirk, at any rate, that seemed a gift Barghash could fairly ask of Britain. Repeatedly and in the clearest terms he had told the Foreign Office that the privileges it had obtained at Zanzibar entailed responsibilities. From 1873 onwards Barghash had not only acquiesced in the wishes of the British people in the only East African matter as to which they had any wishes at all, but, however distasteful it may have been to him and however dangerous to his safety and prestige, he had loyally done his part in carrying them out. Had that not involved the British Government on their side in a moral obligation? Were they not morally committed to doing anything they might be reasonably asked to do for the security and welfare of Barghash and his realm?

Nor was it only the British Government that had obligations. For quite separate reasons the Government of India could not divest themselves of responsibilities in East Africa, 'so grave', as Frere, once a member of that Government, had written in 1873, 'that it has become impossible for them to be longer ignored'.<sup>1</sup> Frere was thinking primarily of the duty of preventing British Indians from participating in the Slave Trade; and it might be said that in the years that had passed since his mission to Zanzibar the Slave Trade had been so largely repressed that the Government of India need do no more than keep a look-out for any signs of its recovery. But they had still, they had always had, a more positive and more agreeable duty. Of the several thousand Indians now settled in East Africa the great majority, as has been observed, were British subjects and the rest were under British protection.<sup>2</sup> They were as much entitled

<sup>1</sup> F. to Granville, 10. iii. 73: K.P. IIIa, 78.

<sup>2</sup> See *East Africa and its Invaders*, 485-6.

to the good offices of their agent and the Government of India as British traders were entitled to those of their consul and the Foreign Office; and it was the unquestionable duty of the Government of India to see that they continued to enjoy security in person and property and to exercise the rights of trade and residence bestowed on them by treaty. A political arrangement, therefore, to promote the safety and prosperity of Zanzibar and its territories might be expected to find as much favour at Fort William as in Whitehall.

It found little in either quarter. When Barghash's offer was communicated by Lord Hartington, then Secretary of State for India, to Lord Ripon, who had succeeded Lord Lytton as Viceroy, and his Council, they submitted the following opinion on it. 'Though we fully admit the advantage to British and especially to British Indian interests of the maintenance of a stable and well ordered government at Zanzibar, we would point out that it has always been against the policy of the Government of India to interfere in the internal affairs and more particularly in the dynastic disputes of Muscat and Zanzibar. It has been our main object in dealing with these States to maintain such relations with the Chiefs as would ensure the safety of trade and the welfare of the numerous British Indian subjects of Her Majesty residing at and trading with the ports on the coast, but at the same time to carefully avoid implicating ourselves in matters over which we could exercise no real influence without an expenditure of money and a display of strength out of all proportion to the advantages to be gained. With regard to . . . the arrangements proposed . . . unless the British Government were prepared to enforce compliance with them when the time came, there would be little or no guarantee for their execution.'<sup>1</sup>

It is impossible to read this dispatch without feeling that Lord Ripon and his colleagues were regarding Muscat and Zanzibar as almost identical propositions and applying to Africa the principles of policy which had long and wisely been applied to Asia. Intervention in Arabia might involve the Government of India in military operations on a large and costly scale such as those which had been required at one time for dealing with the piratical tribes on the coast of the Persian

<sup>1</sup> G. of I. to S. of S., 7. iii. 82: K.P. *misc.*



Gulf.<sup>1</sup> But Zanzibar and the ports of East Africa were quite another matter. Only a cruiser or two was wanted to bring them at need to submission. It seems to have been forgotten at Calcutta that, little more than twenty years ago, the Government of India had interfered 'in the dynastic disputes of Muscat and Zanzibar' and that the only 'display of strength' required to establish a lasting settlement had been the dispatch of a frigate to Muscat and the landing of a naval party at Zanzibar. British Indian Governments, in fact, had never known and understood East Africa as well as they knew and understood the Middle East; and at this critical juncture they apparently failed to realise that the future of Zanzibar was not an intertribal but an international question and that the East African mainland had already become something like a racecourse and was soon to become something like a battleground for the rival Powers of Europe.

They were seized, however, of one point in the international situation and they rightly stressed it. They alluded at the close of their dispatch to the Anglo-French Declaration of 1862. 'A secret treaty', they said, 'involving something approaching to a protectorate in the event of a minority' might be taken to imply 'an encroachment on the independence of Zanzibar'. That was the argument which the British Government used when they finally rejected the offer. In the summer of 1882 Granville wrote a courteous letter to Barghash, thanking him for the confidence his offer had betrayed in the British Government's 'loyalty and goodwill', but suggesting that the best method of attaining his object was the issue of a proclamation defining the succession to the throne in the direct line or, failing male heirs, as he might determine. Ignoring the whole question of a probable minority, Granville went on to say that the person so designated as Barghash's successor would be recognised by the British Government as the lawful sovereign of Zanzibar. 'In such a manner the future of your country and the independence of your throne which both they and the Government of France have engaged to respect will best be maintained.'<sup>2</sup> In a covering dispatch to Miles, Granville cited the Declaration of 1862 as the particular obstacle to the acceptance of the offer.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See *East Africa and its Invaders*, 142-9.

<sup>2</sup> G. to Sultan, 19. vi. 82: K.P. IX. 206.

<sup>3</sup> G. to M., 19. vi. 82: K.P. IX. 206.

There is no reason to doubt that Granville and his fellow ministers sincerely felt that a secret pact behind the back of France was out of tune with the traditions of British diplomacy. But that does not mean that it was impossible in 1882 to supersede the Declaration of 1862 by a new arrangement to which the French Government agreed. In 1890 that very thing was done, though, as will presently appear, under very different circumstances and for a very different object. But it was only Kirk, it seems, who by foresight or by instinct felt that this chance of safeguarding at one stroke the integrity of the Sultan's realm and British interests therein should certainly be taken lest it should prove to be the last.

### 4

Kirk must have regretted the neglect of that last opportunity as much as he had regretted the breakdown of Mackinnon's scheme. They both accorded so closely with his own ideas; for the cardinal point of each was the recognition of Barghash's sovereignty. Both promised to secure British interests by working with him, not over his head or behind his back. In each case he would benefit as well as Britain, and in each, indeed, he had taken the initiative himself. But all that could not be said of another chance of strengthening the British position in the interior which occurred a little later.

Early in 1884 Henry H. Johnston, a keen young naturalist of twenty-five, was commissioned by the Royal Geographical Society, acting jointly on this occasion with the Royal Society and the British Association, to make an intensive study of the fauna and flora on the slopes of Kilimanjaro.<sup>1</sup> In April he was with Kirk at Zanzibar and heard from him of the various Europeans at large in the interior at that time. That some of them might have political designs was an obvious possibility. No more had been heard of Lahune's 'colony', but Révoil was thought to be making treaties in Somaliland.<sup>2</sup> Johnston, therefore, went up to Kilimanjaro prepared to find himself involved

<sup>1</sup> Johnston gives his own detailed account of the sequel in *The Kilimanjaro Expedition* (London, 1886). He assumed, and in 1896 was knighted under, the name 'Harry' instead of 'Henry'.

<sup>2</sup> Sir H. H. Johnston, *The Story of my Life* (London, 1923), 144.

in other than purely scientific matters. He arrived at Moshi in mid-summer, and during the next five months he camped at three different spots on the side of the mountain, assiduously collecting specimens and making notes.<sup>1</sup> His letter of introduction from Kirk secured a friendly reception of 'the *balozzi's* child' from Mandara, and his relations with that capricious and acquisitive chief continued to be fairly amiable till suspicion of the white man's intentions was sown in the black man's mind by Swahili traders who were trying to pursue an illicit trade in slaves.<sup>2</sup> Meantime, though no European treaty-makers had appeared on the scene, Johnston had obtained from Mandara not precisely a treaty, but the conveyance of a piece of land. Two years later, Mandara denied this transaction—he was addicted to denial—and explained that he had sold the land in question to the C.M.S. for a mission station.<sup>3</sup> Johnston made similar purchases of land at two other places on the slopes of Kilimanjaro and also at Taveta. The last of the four agreements, the only one, as it happened, that was to have any political importance, was a personal contract between the local chiefs and Johnston. 'The said Henry Hamilton Johnston,' it ran, 'being anxious to cultivate a district . . . and also to found a settlement and town within which his servants or employees may reside and where he may also invite friends to settle, agrees once for all to pay the Chiefs of Taveta 4 *gora* of *merikani*, 5 *gora* of *sahari*, and 1 *gora* of handkerchiefs together with 1 *frasilah* of beads as a commutation of any land tax or road fees they may have a right to demand. . . . Within the limits now purchased the government and entire rule and possession will belong exclusively to the said Henry Hamilton Johnston or anyone he may designate as his representative.'<sup>4</sup>

Something more than a conveyance of land, more indeed than a treaty of friendship or protection, is indicated by this pregnant document. A scheme of British colonisation, no less,

<sup>1</sup> The results of this scientific work are given, together with long lists of plants collected and animals, birds and insects observed, in the second half of *The Kilimanjaro Expedition*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, chaps. v to ix. This is the fullest account of Mandara given by any traveller.

<sup>3</sup> J. W. Buchanan to W. Mackinnon, 9. ix. 86: K.P. XIII, pt. viii, 39.

<sup>4</sup> Text (signed 27. ix. 84) enclosed in J. F. Hutton to Kitchener, 5. xi. 85: K.P. XII, pt. iii, 12. *Gora*=30 yards of cloth. *Merikani*=American cloth. *Sahari*=cloth for turbans. *Frasilah*=35 lbs.

had swiftly taken shape in Johnston's mind; and in a letter to Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, who had asked him to let him know his 'impressions' of East Africa, he boldly sketched its outlines. 'What I feel impelled to say to you is this. Here is a country as large as Switzerland, enjoying a singularly fertile soil and healthy climate, capable of producing every vegetable production of the tropical and temperate zones, free from the tse-tse fly and therefore adapted to the breeding of oxen, inhabited sparsely by peaceful agriculturalists, skilled in native manufactures and capable and desirous of instruction. Here is a land eminently suited for European colonisation, situated near mid-way between the Equatorial Lakes and the coast. Within a few years it must be either English, French or German.' French and German travellers, he went on, have already submitted schemes of colonisation to their Governments; but 'these are all still hesitating while I am on the spot'. That, no doubt, was the reason why Mandara appeared to favour Johnston's plans. 'He is very anxious for British protection and has asked for a Union Jack.' But the young empire-builder seems to have taken Mandara's sincerity as much for granted as the colonial enthusiasm of his fellow-countrymen at home. Men would be forthcoming, he said, and not much money would be needed. A road to the coast could be made, the 'bush' cleared, and wooden houses built for the settlers for only £5000.<sup>1</sup>

Of all this Kirk knew nothing. He was expecting to hear how Johnston had fared when he returned to Zanzibar in November. But in September he received the following startling telegram from Granville. 'Johnston reports Mandara wishes for British flag and protectorate. He gives highly favourable report of people, country, and climate, and suggests establishment of British colony. What is your opinion?' Kirk suggested in reply that a decision might be postponed till Johnston's return, and Granville agreed; but 'you must use your discretion', he wired, 'in case of danger of our being forestalled'.<sup>2</sup> Kirk was all the

<sup>1</sup> J. to F. 10. vii. 84; K.P. Xb, appendix 1.

<sup>2</sup> G. to K., 23, 26 and 29. ix. 84; K. to G., 24 and 27. ix. 84; *ibid.*, 223-5. In his autobiography, published in 1923, Johnston asserted (*The Story of my Life*, 143-4) that Kirk had planned his expedition in conjunction with the Foreign Office and that this 'treaty-making' was done at Kirk's instigation. Forty years had clearly dimmed Johnston's memory. He said nothing of this

more anxious not to be rushed because he did not altogether like the scheme. He wrote at once, indeed, to explain what he had had to explain repeatedly before. A colony in the interior could not be held without a port on the coast, in this case either Mombasa or Tanga, and the acquisition of such a port—whether by Britain or another power made no difference—would ‘imply the dismemberment in some way or other of the Sultan’s dominions’. ‘Indeed,’ he continued, ‘it is difficult to look on Chagga as altogether outside that territory.’ As to the flag, it would be dangerous to entrust it to Mandara, ‘who, after all, is an utter savage’, without being able to ensure that it was not misused.<sup>1</sup>

A year or so earlier the Foreign Office would probably have deferred at once to Kirk’s opinion; but Germany’s sudden appearance in the colonial arena had brought about a change of attitude. In the course of the summer of 1884 she had seized territory in West Africa where British commercial interests had hitherto prevailed. Might she not do likewise in East Africa? Granville, accordingly, returned to the charge. He sent Kirk a copy of Johnston’s letter to Fitzmaurice and bade him ‘study the subject attentively’. Foreign Governments had recently been showing an unprecedented interest in the African coastlands; and in certain cases ‘prompt and secret’ action had been taken. ‘It is essential that a district situated like that of Kilimanjaro . . . should not be placed under the protection of another flag to the possible detriment of British interests.’<sup>2</sup>

That dispatch has an historic importance. It is the first on record in which a British minister betrays an active political interest in East Africa. The German move, indeed, had forced the Foreign Office to look at that ill-known, out-of-the-way coastland not merely as a haunt of ‘slavers’ or a hunting-ground of missionaries or concessionnaires, but as something closer to its normal work and thought—an important spot on the strategic map of the world. A memorandum drafted at this time by Hill, once a member of Frere’s mission and always a

in his letter to Fitzmaurice, nor is there any trace in the documents of Kirk’s complicity in a ‘political’ expedition. On the contrary, Kirk pencilled on his personal copy of his dispatch of 27. ix. 84, cited above, the words: ‘Johnston never told me of what he was doing.’

<sup>1</sup> K. to G., 27. ix. 84: *ibid.*, 235.

<sup>2</sup> G. to K., 9. x. 84: *ibid.*, 225.

hater of the Trade, shows how this new interest had now been interwoven with the old. 'The geographical position of the East Coast', he wrote, 'lays it more within the general area of our foreign policy than that of the West Coast. Our alternative route by the Cape to India may at any time make it important that we should have possession of or at least free access to good harbours. The importance is not less since the French move to Madagascar. Is it not worth considering whether in view of the European race for territories on the West Coast . . . we might not confine ourselves to securing the utmost possible freedom of trade on that coast, yielding to other Powers the territorial responsibilities so far as compatible with the maintenance of our existing possessions, and seeking compensation on the East Coast where . . . we are at present, but who can say for how long, without a European rival; where the political future of the country is of real importance to Indian and Imperial interests; where the climate is superior; where commerce is capable of vast extension, and where our influence could be exercised, unchecked by the rivalry of Europe, in the extension of civilisation, and the consequent extinction of the Slave Trade for which we have so long laboured?'<sup>1</sup>

The wind was rising, but Kirk would not bow before it. When Johnston returned to Zanzibar in November, he closely questioned him on the details of his plan and forced him to admit that the natives would resent the alienation of their lands, that the Masai grazing grounds were not far off, and that the colony would not be safe without a trained force of five hundred men. Then he took pen and wrote both to Granville and to Anderson, the head of the new African Department at the Foreign Office. Once more he begins by stressing the difficulty of acquiring a port without infringing the integrity of the Zanzibar dominions, and thereby, he now adds, the Anglo-French Declaration of 1862. And the port is quite essential. 'That the healthy highlands of Chagga will some day become the centre of government of some European Power ruling also a coast district seems very likely. It will hold in East Africa the position our hill stations now occupy in India, but it would be as impossible to hold the country around the Himalayas without possessing at the same time Bombay or Calcutta as to

<sup>1</sup> H.'s memo., 20. x. 84: K.P. Xb. appendix, 4-6.

attempt to rule Chagga without also possessing Mombasa or Tanga. Nor do I think [he goes on, and this is a still more basic criticism of Johnston's scheme] that a colony in the true sense of the term, where the white race can permanently exist and perpetuate itself, could be founded anywhere in Central Africa.' Finally, if the Sultan thought that the British Government were contemplating the occupation of Chagga, 'it would alter our relations in an instant.' He would see it for what it was, 'the signal for a general scramble and there would be little left of Zanzibar'.<sup>1</sup>

At the same time Kirk frankly admitted the danger of inaction. 'It is a pity we hauled down the British flag at Mombasa when we held it under cession in 1823. . . . Had we kept Mombasa and the whole coast then ceded to us, the slave question would have been settled and by this time we should have had dominion over tropical Africa.' As it is, 'we cannot expect to go on long as we have done here. . . . If we hesitate, some other Power, less scrupulous, may step in and forestall us. . . . The French priests are very desirous that France should move here. . . . The Belgian International Association has ideas that cross the whole continent. . . . There are mysterious Germans travelling inland and a German man-of-war is reported on the coast. . . . You will remember, too, the letter of the Sultan's sister. . . .'<sup>2</sup> A claim can easily be founded through her, and I shall be very much surprised if we do not hear of her again. . . .'<sup>3</sup> A formidable combination of dangers, but Kirk, of course, had a policy for dealing with them—the old policy. Back the Sultan and do everything possible to strengthen British *influence* in the Kilimanjaro area. Planters will not go there yet awhile, and capital will not face the risk to life and property. But British missionaries, British scientists, British sportsmen after big game—why not? All that is needed is to establish a claim for keeping the country neutral and open to all nations. That is the status of the Sultan's dominions on the coast and, so far as they extend inland, it meets all our needs.<sup>3</sup>

A few days after Kirk wrote those dispatches a telegram arrived from the Foreign Office. 'Endeavour to obtain from

<sup>1</sup> K. to G., 23. xi. 84: K. to A., 24. xi. 84: K.P. Xb. appendix, 19–21.

<sup>2</sup> Emily Ruete; see pp. 45–8 above, and Chap. XVIII below.

<sup>3</sup> K. to G. and A. as cited, note 1 above.

Sultan a spontaneous declaration that he will accept no protectorate from, and will cede no sovereign rights or territories to, any Association or Power without consent of England.' The next day came another. 'Have you any reason for supposing Germany is taking steps for obtaining protectorate over East Coast?' A week later, another. 'Have you communicated with Sultan? Time presses.' Next day, one more. 'If Sultan will give required declaration, H.M.G. have a proposal as regards mainland which they trust would be as advantageous to H.H. as to themselves.'<sup>1</sup>

Kirk quickly carried out his instructions. The 'time presses' telegram reached him on December 5. Barghash signed the declaration on December 6.

'I, Barghash-bin-Said, Sultan of Zanzibar and of the interior of Africa, will not accept the protectorate of any nation whatever nor cede my sovereign rights or any part of my dominions which are in the islands or on the mainland of Africa from Tungi in the south to Warsheikh in the north to any Power or Association without consulting the English, and this I do for myself and my successors.

'Be it known by all who shall see this.

'Written by my hand: 17 Safar 1302, 6 December 1884.'<sup>2</sup>

Meantime, Granville's 'proposals', accompanied by an explanatory memorandum by Hill, were on their way to Zanzibar by mail. They showed that Kirk's opinion had once more prevailed. The British Government's policy was to be his policy, applied to meet the new situation on precisely the sort of lines which he had long been urging Barghash to pursue. The Sultan's authority on the mainland was not to be undermined, but confirmed and extended, if possible, to Kilimanjaro. To that end the Sultan should be advised to send an embassy to Mandara and the other chiefs of the neighbourhood to negotiate treaties recognising his paramount authority over them. The mission should be escorted by Mathews' troops, and military outposts, like Mamboia, might be established on the way inland,

<sup>1</sup> F.O. to K., 27 and 28. xi. 5 and 6. xii. 84: K.P. Xb. 259-261.

<sup>2</sup> English translation in manuscript, with the following note by Kirk: 'The original is written in Arabic throughout by Seyyid Barghash. John Kirk.' K.P. Xb. appendix, inserted at p. 15.



'sufficient to demonstrate the reality of the Sultan's suzerainty'. 'General Mathews' presence would ensure discipline and good order, and he would be accompanied by Sir J. Kirk or one of his able assistants who, with a knowledge of the native tongues, would explain to the natives *en route* and to the chiefs of the district the object of the embassy. If the Sultan's suzerainty is declined, the embassy would return, unsuccessful indeed but without, it is to be hoped, firing a shot. In this event there is no reason why our representative should not make treaties with the chiefs, who may be willing to make them, like those which have recently secured for us the Niger and Oil River districts; it would then rest with us to act on them.' But it seemed probable the mission would succeed. The protection offered to Mandara would be practically the same protection as that for which he had recently asked. There might well be other chiefs, 'who, if they were assured that they would be left in undisturbed possession of their property, would equally welcome a government which could put down the system of petty wars and the attendant Slave Trade which now disturbs their country.' The Sultan, it was understood, would 'proclaim the abolition of Slavery throughout the whole district which would thus come under his control'.<sup>1</sup>

Given the requisite declaration, these measures would safeguard both the Sultan's interest and Britain's. The hinterland of the Sultan's coastal territory would be shielded from foreign annexation, and Britain could retain her 'paramount influence and free commercial access'. Nor would it add to the obligations Britain had already incurred in East Africa whether for the final destruction of the Slave Trade or for the welfare of British Indians or for the protection of the strategic arteries of the Empire. If the Sultan's realm should 'fall to pieces, who', asked Hill, 'must be its successor? Could we admit another occupation like that of Madagascar on our alternative route to India? Is it not better to forestall others by encouraging this very moderate but most precious extension of territory on the part of the power whose natural, though it may be reluctant, heirs we may hereafter become?'<sup>2</sup>

On a realistic view of international relations it is difficult to

<sup>1</sup> G. to K., 5. xii. 84; Hill's memo., 9. xii. 84; K.P. Xb. appendix, 9-11.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

regard the policy thus outlined as a piece of rapacious 'imperialism'. The Gladstone Government, it is true, had realised that material British interests were in danger, but their plan for securing them was not Johnston's plan but Kirk's, not 'annexation' but 'influence', not the British flag but the Sultan's. It contemplated a similar development in East Africa to that which presently came about in the Nile valley. If its execution had not been interrupted, Zanzibar and the coast would presumably have acquired the same sort of status that Egypt acquired in the course of the next generation with Kirk or his successor in Cromer's rôle, and the interior the same sort of status as the Sudan. It meant, of course, that the strength of the British position at Zanzibar was more explicitly recognised than it had been before. Barghash's declaration implied a sort of veiled protectorate. But that was not by any means an arbitrary or one-sided arrangement. Zanzibar was quite unable, then as always, to protect itself and its dominions; and if Britain did not protect them, France or Germany would certainly take on the task. Barghash for his part would have preferred, no doubt, to do without protection, to be perfectly free and independent in a peaceful and virtuous world; but as he had to have a protector, there is no question that, rightly or wrongly, like his father and brother before him, he chose Britain. In 1877 he had asked for British aid in developing the mainland. In 1881 he had asked for a British regency. Both requests as clearly implied a virtual British protectorate as the declaration he had now made in 1884; and, since for eleven years past he had done what Britain wanted him to do—under compulsion at the outset, but thereafter with genuine good-will—did not common loyalty require, as Kirk so often said, that Britain should now do what he wanted?

But, suppose for the sake of argument that Barghash's wishes did not count—and how little indeed they did count in the end will soon be seen—it might be asked, 'What right had Britain to appropriate the not unprofitable function of protecting Zanzibar?' No absolute right, of course—there are no such rights in politics—but at least a reasonable claim. It was not a new function for Britain. She had in fact performed it ever since the rise of Oman sixty years ago and the extension of its power to the coast of Africa. She had protected the Zanzibar dominions

from the French between 1840 and 1850 and in 1859, from the Egyptians in 1875-6, and from the British themselves in 1824 and 1838.<sup>1</sup> There had always been, moreover, at Zanzibar and all along the coast an immigrant community which was entitled—it must be stressed again—to British protection. Indians had been in East Africa as long as Arabs, but they had come there in increasing numbers after the establishment of a British agency and consulate. They had been mainly responsible for the great development of trade. They owned or financed almost all the business. They possessed by purchase or by mortgage more than half the landed property. Their capital investment in the country amounted to several millions sterling. And they provided nearly all the revenue. Towards them, too, apart from the general responsibility for safeguarding the interests of British subjects and ‘protected persons’, the British Government had incurred a special moral obligation. British law for the prevention of slave trading and slave holding had been enforced on them regardless of their vested interests and without a ‘shilling’ of compensation. Clearly they were justified, as Kirk again had more than once asserted, in asking that British protection should not be withdrawn. From a second angle, therefore, it appears that there were other than purely selfish arguments for the proposed arrangement. Strange as it may seem to cynics, British duty in this matter of the Indians coincided with British interest.<sup>2</sup>

There is another question. To Kirk and the ministers who had taken his advice the extension of the Sultan’s authority over the interior meant a parallel extension of British ‘influence’. Whether under some such system as Mackinnon had devised or by more direct government action, the political control of the interior would be in British hands; and, albeit on a basis of free trade, British business would take the lead in its economic development. That would do no wrong, as Barghash himself had realised, to him or his Arabs. On the contrary, it would do for them, to their great material advantage, what they had never had the wish nor the capacity to do for themselves.

<sup>1</sup> *East Africa and its Invaders*, chaps. viii, ix and xiv, and Chaps. II and XIII above.

<sup>2</sup> See Kirk’s opinion, p. 283 above, and for another statement of the Indian case, see Holmwood’s memorandum on the Zanzibar Succession: K.P. Xb. appendix, 12.

## THE BRITISH OPPORTUNITY

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Through all the centuries since first they colonised the coast, the Arabs had never attempted to administer the country or exploit its natural resources (except ivory and human beings) at any distance from their seaboard towns or inland settlements. They had done no good to the people of East Africa. Indeed, as Livingstone often said, they had done nothing but harm. But once more the question may be put: Granted that European control of the interior was more to the advantage of the Africans, and indeed of the Arabs, than Arab control, why again should it be British? Again the answer is plain. First, the 'discovery' of the interior, the setting of its major features on the map of European knowledge, was the work of British explorers. Secondly, of the few Europeans who had so far settled down to live and work in the interior, the great majority were British missionaries. Thirdly, Britain had had a longer and wider training in the difficult art of governing primitive or backward races than any other nation, including even France. But those were relatively minor points. Far more decisive was the fact that only the British people had done a service in the past to the people of East Africa as a whole, and it had been the greatest service it was possible to do to them. If any nation could assert a prior claim to govern and develop the country, surely it was the nation which had saved its people from being killed or carried off by the 'slavers' and its land from being despoiled and left to waste.

### 5

The policy outlined in Granville's dispatch of December 5 was backed by a group of younger ministers who in colonial policy as in other matters were becoming restive under Gladstone's rein. The leaders of this 'forward party' were Sir Charles Dilke and Joseph Chamberlain, both of whom disliked the recent surrender of British to German claims in the Cameroons and were anxious that the same thing should not happen in East Africa. They were supported by Fitzmaurice who, as has been seen, was interested in Johnston's activities, and by Kimberley at the India Office who wrote in strong terms to Granville on November 21. 'I see rumours that the Germans have designs on Zanzibar. In ordinary circs. one would pay no attention to

them; but the Germans show such an aggressive spirit that we cannot tell what they may do next. Besides Zanzibar might have a particular attraction to Bismarck as being a quarter where German interference would be specially disagreeable to England.<sup>1</sup> But the ideas of this 'forward party' had never been shared by Gladstone, and, when it came to the point, they failed to carry him with them even along the lines of Kirk's policy. At a cabinet meeting on December 14, Dilke noted in his diary, 'Mr. Gladstone broke out against the proposed annexations in what is now called the Kilimanjaro district.' Shortly afterwards Dilke received a letter of remonstrance from his chief. 'Terribly have I been puzzled and perplexed on finding a group of the soberest men among us to have concocted a scheme such as that touching the mountain country behind Zanzibar with an unrememberable name. There *must* somewhere or other be reasons for it which have not come before me. I have asked Granville if it may not stand over for a while.'<sup>2</sup> The request, of course, was obeyed. On December 20 Granville telegraphed to Kirk bidding him 'suspend action' on the dispatch of December 5 and find out if the Sultan would take steps to confirm his overlordship of the Kilimanjaro area 'without support from us'. It was a delicate task since any discussion of his rights in the interior would make Barghash suspect that plans of annexation were afoot. 'Will take occasion cautiously sound Sultan,' Kirk replied, and on January 16 he reported the result. 'Satisfactory arrangement difficult. Sultan regards mountain district named as his already, but takes little interest in it, has small trade there, and is unable to give protection if unassisted. . . .'<sup>3</sup> It was true that Mathews' army was incapable of affording permanent protection to the chiefs of Kilimanjaro, but it was quite strong enough, as will soon appear, to escort a mission to Mandara; and, if he could have foreseen the events of the next six months, Kirk might have taken a bolder line. As it was, the idea of doing anything in pursuance of Kirk's previous advice or of trying in any way to safeguard Kilimanjaro was abandoned.

For a few weeks longer the idea that something or other must

<sup>1</sup> K. to G., 24. xi. 84; G.D. 29. 136.

<sup>2</sup> S. Gwynn and G. M. Tuckwell, *Life of Sir Charles Dilke* (London, 1917), ii. 83-4.

<sup>3</sup> G. to K., 20. xii. 84 and 2. i. 85; F.O. 84. 1676 and 1722; K. to G., 2 and 16. i. 85; F.O. 84. 1724.

be done to ward off the German menace to East Africa still haunted the minds of some at least of Gladstone's colleagues. Kimberley, for instance, discovered rather late in the day that Indian claims as well as British were involved. 'I have been reading the interesting F.O. printed papers about Zanzibar,' he wrote to Granville on December 21. 'I strongly hope that we shall take timely and effective measures to obtain such control over Zanzibar as may enable us to forestall the French and German designs. From an Indian point of view I regard it as of very serious importance that no foreign Power should oust us from that coast.'<sup>1</sup> This was vigorous language, and the Foreign Office made one more effort. Might not the Sultan be told that it would serve to protect the integrity of his dominions if he would define their limits by proclamation? Kirk could see to it that his claims were not so extravagant as to provoke 'criticism by other Powers', but they might, if Kirk thought fit, include Kilimanjaro. A telegram to that effect was drafted on December 31, but it was not sent. 'Ld. G. thinks', runs an office minute on the draft, 'that the Cabt. will not agree to this and that we had better leave it alone.'<sup>2</sup>

Those deliberations and hesitations were, as it happens, of little practical importance. The last chance had gone of establishing the joint control of Britain and Zanzibar over the great mainland belt between Lake Tanganyika and the sea so firmly, and so clearly with the Sultan's accord, that it could not have been challenged by any other Power. Between November 10 and December 17 Carl Peters had quietly and quickly laid the foundations of German East Africa.

<sup>1</sup> K. to G., 21. xii. 84: G.D. 29. 136.

<sup>2</sup> G. to K., 31. xii. 84, draft: F.O. 84. 1679.

# XVII

## THE GERMAN IRRUPTION

(1884-1885)

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### I

Soon after the settlement of Europe at the close of the Napoleonic wars a desire for the acquisition of colonies had begun to show itself in Germany.<sup>1</sup> The movement originated in Hamburg and the other Hanseatic ports whose merchants and shipping firms were naturally more interested in overseas enterprise than other Germans. Its objective was twofold. On the one hand, territory was needed oversea in which German emigrants could make their homes under German flags. Between 1820 and 1870 no less than 2,770,000 of them had been 'lost to the fatherland' by settling in foreign countries.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, the possession of new supplies of raw materials and the control of new markets seemed essential to the growth of German trade. Britain, it was wrongly supposed, had got rich by getting colonies: Germany must follow her example. But it was not till after 1871 that the movement gathered force. The creation of the German Empire had confirmed its old aims and given it new ones. It was not enough for Germany to be the greatest nation

<sup>1</sup> No full account of the German colonial movement can be attempted in this book. Students will consult the extensive German literature on the subject. M. von Koschitsky's lengthy *Deutsche Kolonialgeschichte* (2 vols. Leipzig, 1888) is undocumented, but based on contemporary information. The best short account is A. Zimmermann's *Geschichte der Deutschen Kolonialpolitik* (Berlin, 1914). East Africa is specially treated by G. Jantzen, *Ostafrika in der deutsch-englischen Politik, 1884-90* (Hamburg, 1934) and B. Kurtze, *Die Deutsch-Ostafrikanische Gesellschaft* (Jena, 1913). The fullest study in English, based mainly on German sources, is M. E. Townsend's *Rise and Fall of Germany's Colonial Empire* (New York, 1930). The diplomatic factors are clearly analysed in A. J. P. Taylor's *Germany's First Bid for Colonies* (London, 1938).

<sup>2</sup> E. G. Jacob, *Deutsche Kolonialpolitik in Dokumenten* (Leipzig, 1938), 14.

on the continent of Europe: she must also be great on the seas; and sea-power was linked with colonies. It had become, moreover, a question of prestige. Britain and France had colonies. Was not Germany entitled to them too? Along these lines a body of philosophic doctrine was developed in the decade after 1871 of which Treitschke was the most influential exponent. 'Every virile people', he declared, 'has established colonial power'<sup>1</sup>—an idea which would never have occurred to Englishmen, whose empire-building has seldom been inspired or excused by theoretical generalisations. The movement came to a head with the foundation in 1882 of the *Deutsche Kolonialverein*, a powerful association, presently equipped with a newspaper of its own, the *Kolonialzeitung*. It included or superseded a number of smaller societies which had sprung up during the last forty years—one under Kersten's auspices in 1868—in response to the growing interest in overseas travel, exploration and trade. It also took over the functions of the German national committee of Leopold's International Association. Its primary purpose was 'to extend to a larger circle the realisation of the necessity of applying national energy to the field of colonisation.'<sup>2</sup>

This colonial movement was still, however, quite a secondary thread in the web of German politics, and its adherents only a small minority of the German people. There was little hope, therefore, of its attaining its ends without the backing of the Government, and till 1883 that was not forthcoming. Bismarck, it seemed, did not believe in colonies—at any rate not for the time being. Anxious only to secure and strengthen the new position Germany had won in Europe, he saw that the quest of colonies would inevitably involve a challenge to Britain or France or both without promising any effective increase in German power. He admitted in 1876 that 'a great nation like Germany could not in the end dispense with colonies'. But the time was not ripe. Preparation was needed. There must be a 'national impulse'.<sup>3</sup> He firmly rejected, therefore, the various colonial proposals submitted to him in those years. With regard to East Africa, for example, he ignored, if he ever knew of, Barghash's impulsive appeal to Schultz in 1870.<sup>4</sup> He refused the request

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Townsend, 56.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 82.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 95 above.



made by Kersten and Brenner in 1874 for a protectorate over Zanzibar and Witu.<sup>1</sup> He brushed aside Livonius' memorandum in 1875.<sup>2</sup> He took no interest in the work begun by the Denhardtts on the Tana in 1879.<sup>3</sup> Even in 1881, he said, 'As long as I am Chancellor, we will carry on no colonial policies.'<sup>4</sup> Yet, a year or two earlier, he had begun to interest himself in the Pacific and to press the Reichstag to subsidise German enterprise in Samoa. For a little longer his attitude seemed uncertain. As late as March 1884 Count Münster, the anglophil German ambassador in London, could tell Granville—and maybe he knew no better—that Bismarck was doing all he could to combat the colonial agitation in shipping and industrial circles. 'It was well known that the Prince was absolutely opposed to their ardent desire for the acquisition of colonies by Germany.'<sup>5</sup> A month later Bismarck began his series of colonial annexations.

Did Bismarck think the 'national impulse' now sufficient for the execution of designs he had conceived years before and patiently postponed? Opinions may differ as to that, but this much seems reasonably certain—that, whatever he may have thought about the future, the immediate advantage Bismarck hoped to win by his colonial move was not to be found in the colonies themselves. Their economic value to Germany was relatively trivial. They had no strategic value, nor indeed was their ownership secure, without sea-power. To the past-master of *Realpolitik* colonies at that moment were only pawns on the European chess-board; and it seems clear that the foundation of the German colonial empire was primarily inspired by Bismarck's desire to obtain an *entente* with France by picking a quarrel with Britain.<sup>6</sup>

## 2

Once Germany had taken her colonial course, she moved rapidly. Almost all her colonies were acquired in little more

<sup>1</sup> Jantzen, 17.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 336 above.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Townsend, 60. The best-known pronouncement came in 1889: 'Von Haus auf bin ich kein Kolonialmensch,' but by then the German overseas empire had been established.

<sup>5</sup> G. to Malet, 2. vii. 85., cited in *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*, iii. 207, note.

<sup>6</sup> See Taylor, *passim*.

than twelve months. Between April and July 1884, protectorates were declared over the districts that were to grow into German South West Africa, Togoland and the Cameroons. The German flag would also have flown over St. Lucia Bay if the British flag had not forestalled it in December. And it is significant that in October Bismarck convened the international conference at Berlin which presently decided *inter alia* that, 'in order that new occupations on the coasts of the African continent may be held to be effective', any Power taking possession of or assuming a protectorate over land thereon must be prepared to establish sufficient authority to maintain existing rights and such freedom of trade and transit as may be agreed on.<sup>1</sup>

It was in 1884, likewise, that the first move was made to supplement and regularise the pioneer efforts of German scientists and explorers in East Africa. On October 1 Gerhard Rohlfs was appointed consul-general at Zanzibar, and, sailing by way of West Africa and the Cape in a German warship, he arrived at the island on January 28, 1885.<sup>2</sup> Rohlfs had won a place in the front rank of German explorers by his great journey from Tripoli to Lagos in 1865-7; and, like von der Decken on the other side of the continent, he wanted German colonies in Africa. In the course of a public lecture given on his return from a visit to the Cameroons, 'Is it not deplorable', he asked, 'that we are obliged to assist, inactive and without the power to intervene, in the expansion of England in Central Africa?'<sup>3</sup> Rohlfs' colonial aspirations, therefore, could be no more kept secret than his appointment, and on that account Sir Edward Malet had been assured by Bismarck in November that 'Germany was not endeavouring to obtain a protectorate over Zanzibar'.<sup>4</sup> That British ministers were not wholly satisfied with this apparently unequivocal statement is clear from the account of their attitude given in the preceding chapter. It was at the end of November that that series of anxious telegrams to Kirk began, and the decision to secure Kilimanjaro by joint action with the Sultan went out on December 5. On December 14, as has been seen, Gladstone called a halt. But it was not yet a retreat. The British posi-

<sup>1</sup> Chap. vi, Article 35, of the General Act: A. B. Keith, *op. cit.*, 315.

<sup>2</sup> Townsend, 99. K. to Granville, 28. i. 85; K.P. XII. pt. i. 3.

<sup>3</sup> E. Lewin, *The Germans and Africa* (2nd ed. London, 1938), 65.

<sup>4</sup> Malet to Hatzfeldt, 16. i. 85; K.P. XII. pt. i. 2.

tion, after all, confirmed, as it had been, by Barghash's secret pledge, was a strong one—so strong, indeed, that Granville presently decided to state it fully and clearly to Bismarck and defy him, as it were, to challenge it. When, therefore, the news got out and was reported with 'considerable uneasiness' in the British press that Rohlfs was going to Zanzibar and going in a man-of-war, Granville took occasion to inform Bismarck that he had construed his assurance in November to mean that the German Government considered East Africa 'as beyond the sphere of German political interest', and to remind him of the special place which Britain occupied in that part of the world. 'For the greater part of the present century', he wrote, 'the Sultans of Muscat and Zanzibar have been under the direct influence of the United Kingdom and of the Government of India.' He then briefly referred to the Canning Arbitration of 1861—but not, for some reason, to the Anglo-French Declaration of 1862<sup>1</sup>—to the British efforts to suppress the Slave Trade, to the provision of communications by a subsidised British steamship line and by a British telegraph company, to the settlement of British Indians at Zanzibar and on the coast and the extension of their trading operations far inland, and to the commercial opportunities which were offered under the existing *régime* to the merchants of all nations alike. The British Government, he concluded, desired to support the sovereignty and independence of the Sultan, and they were sure that the Chancellor would 'readily recognise the spirit' of this communication.<sup>2</sup>

The German reply was disarming. It expressed surprise at such formal notice being taken of rumours in the press. It assumed that the 'direct influence' exercised at Zanzibar by the British and Indian Governments did not infringe the Sultan's independence—had it not been guaranteed by the Anglo-French Declaration?—nor impair Germany's right to make commercial treaties with him such as the United States, Britain, France and the Hanseatic League had made. The independence of Zanzibar had been recognised, moreover, by the 'Congo Conference' now in session, and the hope had been expressed that negotiations with the Sultan might lead to the

<sup>1</sup> This was at first a secret agreement, but it was published in 1868.

<sup>2</sup> Granville to Malet, 14. i. 85; Malet to Hatzfeldt, 16. i. 85; K.P. XII. pt. i. 1-2.

extension of the provisions for free trade in the Congo basin through his dominions to the Indian Ocean. How, then, could British interests be endangered, and what could 'the spirit' mean?<sup>1</sup> Granville at once drew back. Nothing in his communication, he said, was intended to question Germany's right to make a treaty. He had only wished 'in a friendly manner' to acquaint the Chancellor with certain facts.<sup>2</sup> Some ten days later Münster confirmed the official interpretation of Rohlfs' mission. His instructions, he told Granville, were to try to persuade the Sultan to adhere to the Berlin Act which had now just been signed. Rohlfs, he added, had already reported from Zanzibar that, if all the foreign representatives worked together, the prospects of thus obtaining the freedom of the transit trade were good.<sup>3</sup>

On the face of it this explanation of the new German interest in Zanzibar was as innocent as it was candid; but, while this diplomatic correspondence was passing between London and Berlin, very different things were happening in East Africa itself. Carl Peters, born in 1856 at Neuhaus near the mouth of the Elbe, had become the leading spirit among the younger colonial enthusiasts in Germany; and early in 1884 he founded the *Gesellschaft für Deutsche Kolonisation* in order to obtain the requisite backing for the daring enterprise he had conceived. In September he and three companions, Count Joachim Pfeil, Dr. Carl Jühlke and August Otto, left Trieste for Aden, disguised as mechanics, under false names and with third-class tickets. From Aden they continued their voyage as deck passengers in a British India boat and on November 4 they landed at Zanzibar. There they found a telegram from Bismarck warning them not to expect protection in their enterprise from the German Government; but on November 10, undaunted and still quite unsuspected, they crossed to Saadani, and struck due west up the valley of the Wami. Forced marches brought them quickly into Usagara, and without delay they started to 'do business' with sundry chiefs in that and the adjacent districts. Three weeks or so were enough, and Peters was soon on his way back to the coast with Jühlke. Otto had fallen

<sup>1</sup> Münster to G., 6. ii. 85; *ibid.*, 3. The Anglo-French Declaration of 1862 is called a 'treaty' and wrongly dated 1860.

<sup>2</sup> G. to Malet, 14. ii. 85; *ibid.*, 4.

<sup>3</sup> M. to G., 25. ii. 85; *ibid.*, 5.

ill and died in Usagara, and Pfeil had stayed on alone at Muinyi. On December 17 Peters was at Zanzibar, with twelve 'treaties' in his pocket, purporting to surrender to his Company the sovereignty over a large area in Usagara, Useguha (Uzigua), Ukami and Nguru.<sup>1</sup> They were short and simple treaties, and one may be cited as typical of them all. In the 'Treaty of Eternal Friendship' with Mangungo, Sultan of Msovero in Usagara, for example, Mangungo 'offers all his territory with all its civil and public appurtenances to Dr. Carl Peters as the representative of the Society for German Colonisation for exclusive and universal utilisation for German colonisation'. That was much, but not quite enough. The last words of the document stated that the Sultan 'on direct inquiry . . . declared that he was not in any way dependent upon the Sultan of Zanzibar and that he even did not know of the existence of the latter'.<sup>2</sup> Similar agreements have been made at various times and places by agents of all the European nations interested in the development of the tropics; and the moral or even the legal worth of many of them, though by no means all, is obviously questionable. Ignorant chiefs were often quite incapable of understanding what the white men really wanted or what the cession of their lands really meant; and interpretation, always difficult, can easily be dishonest. Had the chiefs of Taveta realised all that might follow from the agreements they had made with another young white man only a few months earlier and a few score miles farther north?<sup>3</sup> It was unlikely, but less unlikely than that Mangungo had never heard of a Sultan at Zanzibar. Peters' treaties, however, were good enough for their purpose and were soon to serve it; and, if Kirk had known about them, he would have been alarmed. As it was, he thought that the enterprise had proved a failure. 'The German exploring party to the regions opposite this island', he reported on April 10, 'seems to have

<sup>1</sup> A. Chéradame, *La Colonisation et les Colonies Allemandes* (Paris, 1905), 85. Holmwood, after seeing the treaties, estimated the extent of territory they covered at about 2,500 square miles: H. to Granville, 26. iii. 85; K.P. XII. pt. i. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Signed by Peters and Mangungo at Msovero, 29. xi. 84. Translation from German, enclosed in Holmwood to Granville, 23. iii. 85; *ibid.*, 10. Another of the treaties begins: 'The Sultana Mbumi, Lady of the Province of Mukondokwa in Usagara, who on direct enquiry declares she is not and never has been dependent in any way on the Sultan of Zanzibar.'

<sup>3</sup> See p. 383 above.

come to utter grief. . . . There only remains Graf von Pfeil who is in very bad health and is said by a German trader just come from him to be unlikely to live much longer.<sup>1</sup>

Kirk, indeed, was more worried about the Denhardts' activities than Peters'. Those persistent brothers returned to Lamu towards the end of 1884, and at the outset of 1885 they were at Zanzibar, organising a new 'geographical' expedition. About January 20 the younger brother sailed for Lamu in charge of it, accompanied by Herr Schlunke who had previously been employed on Mackinnon's road at Dar-es-Salaam. Reports of their conversation on shipboard on their voyage were puzzling. At one time they spoke of being associated with their Government and expecting the arrival of their consul-general at Zanzibar. At another they professed to be unaware of Rohlf's appointment. 'It is this mystery', wrote Kirk, 'that makes their movements doubtful.'<sup>2</sup> It was presently rumoured that they were in communication with Simba, the notorious Sultan of Witu.<sup>3</sup> This was bad news, if true. In the previous August Haggard, vice-consul at Lamu, had visited Witu and found it a nest of hornets. 'Simba's following,' he reported, 'which is composed chiefly of all the malcontents, bankrupts and felons of the surrounding country and very largely also of runaway slaves, has become numerous, powerful and dreaded. . . . Of late years they have lived chiefly by plundering the neighbouring villages and by selling the captured inhabitants as slaves to the Somali. . . . No man now dare work alone in his own field if only a few hundred yards away from his own village.' To enter the town Haggard had to make his way through a belt of dense bush and then by a narrow gate through a strong stockade. His interview with Simba, 'a very old man and a cripple', passed off without incident. Haggard's business was mainly to obtain facilities for British Indian trade. Simba for his part asked that Kirk should convey to the Sultan the following message: 'that he, Simba, was an old man now and wished to live and die at peace with all men'. That evening, however, after dark, Simba's brother-in-law and chief adviser came to Haggard, accused him of insulting Simba, and threatened him with punishment. If he would consent to smuggle guns and

<sup>1</sup> K. to G., 10. iv. 85; K.P. XII. pt. i. 30.

<sup>2</sup> K. to G., 15. i. 85; *ibid.*, 4.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 114 above.

powder for Simba from Lamu, he might escape what was coming to him. 'The man's manner towards me', writes Haggard, 'was so sinister and ferocious that I could not but feel uneasy at my helpless position in a town full of savages and so securely walled that a cat could not escape.' Nothing happened, however, and after another day, when Haggard saw Simba again and found him 'cold', he was allowed to go. A parting request reached him through his interpreter. 'If he would not smuggle the guns himself, would he ask Kirk to do it?' Haggard reckoned that Simba could muster 3,000 men and a host of slaves—he owned 600 himself—and, unless he and his gang of bandits were soon suppressed, 'the ruin of this fine country', he declared, 'will soon be complete'.<sup>1</sup>

Such was the dangerous ruffian with whom, if that rumour were true, the Denhardts were in touch; and Barghash wisely decided to reaffirm without delay his own authority as Simba's overlord. For some months past, as it happened, he had been pressing Simba to hoist the flag of Zanzibar. Now he enjoined him to perform this act of allegiance without delay and to have no dealings with strangers. Simba, in reply, repeated the protestations he had made from the outset. After God and his Prophet, Barghash was the master he obeyed. But as to the flag, he feared his people. As regards the Christians, he was friendly with them and no more.<sup>2</sup> These were palpable evasions, and they took on a darker colour when, early in February, Kirk heard that Rohlf's had asked Barghash about his appeal for a protectorate to Consul Schultz in 1870.<sup>3</sup> He at once questioned Barghash on the point, but it was now Barghash who was evasive. He denied the offer of 1870 and he denied that Rohlf's had mentioned it.<sup>4</sup> But Kirk was not wholly reassured, and his

<sup>1</sup> H. to K., 25. viii. 84; K.P. Xb. 229-32.

<sup>2</sup> Extracts from seven of Simba's letters to B. and to the Governor of Lamu between 24. x. 84 and 29. ii. 85, with K.'s memo. thereon, enclosed in K. to G., 23. xi. 85; K.P. XII. pt. ii. 32 E-F. <sup>3</sup> See p. 95 above.

<sup>4</sup> K. to G., 14. ii. 85; K.P. XII. pt. i. 7. Under pressure Barghash admitted the existence of the letter, but denied that he had authorised the writing of it. Kirk believed that Barghash did ask for protection, but did not mean a protectorate (see p. 95 above). The 'offer' of a protectorate in 1874 mentioned by Koschitsky (*op. cit.*, i. 127), and by Jacob (*op. cit.*, 25)—see also Zimmermann (*op. cit.*, 14, note)—can only be the request made to Bismarck by Kersten and Brenner (see p. 397 above) with which Barghash was not concerned.

talk with the captain of the *Gneisenau* a few days later increased his uneasiness; for Captain Valoes, like other visitors to the coast, had observed how insubstantial the Sultan's authority seemed at the Somali ports. 'The time has come', he said, 'when the Sultan should be called upon to show where he has real power and to make room elsewhere for others.' He had been on the West Coast and much preferred the East. Its many harbours, especially Port Durnford, had impressed him: 'magnificent' he called them. He had put in at Lamu, and had had a quarrel, as it happened, with Barghash's Governor there.<sup>1</sup>

Lamu is close to Witu, and for several weeks after the *Gneisenau's* departure the rumours persisted; but at the beginning of March Kirk's attention was diverted to the interior. Peters' expedition had not been such a failure after all.

## 3

Peters had taken his treaties immediately to Berlin, and on his arrival there on February 7 he had at once begun to importune Bismarck to give him after the event the backing he had refused before it. But Bismarck was biding his time. In the winter of 1884-5 he was pressing his colonial claims elsewhere than in East Africa. In December, after a sharp dispute with Granville, he annexed the north coast of New Guinea and the New Britain archipelago.<sup>2</sup> In the new year he complained that the British Government were thwarting his legitimate designs in West Africa. Public opinion was mobilised by the publication of a series of 'White Books'—a novelty in Germany—stating the German case on these colonial issues, and the press was permitted or encouraged to whip up German patriotism against 'John Bull's' imperial greed and selfishness. Thus the domestic stage had been well set when news from the Sudan gave Bismarck his East African cue. On January 26 the Mahdi hoisted the prophet's flag over Gordon's body at Khartum. It was a shock to British prestige throughout North Africa, and it came at a moment when Britain was seriously embarrassed in other quarters. As if the sharp friction with France over Egypt were not enough, a Russian army was advancing south from Penjdeh—a move which might well mean a war with Russia to maintain the

<sup>1</sup> K. to G., 17. ii. 85; K.P. XII. pt. 1. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Townsend, 106.



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independence of Afghanistan and the security of the Indian frontier. Bismarck, therefore, could feel sure of his ground at the end of January, but he waited till the close of the Berlin Conference. The General Act was signed on February 26, and next day he obtained the Emperor Wilhelm's signature to a *Schutzbrief*, taking the territories acquired by Peters under imperial protection. On March 2 the delegates dispersed. On March 3 he published it.

'We, William, by the grace of God, German Emperor, King of Prussia, make known and ordain as follows:

'The present Presidents of the Society for German Colonisation, Dr. Carl Peters and our Chamberlain Felix, Count Behr-Bandelin, having sought our protection for the territorial acquisitions of the Society in East Africa, west of the empire of the Sultan of Zanzibar, and outside of the suzerainty<sup>1</sup> of other Powers, and the treaties lately concluded by the said Dr. Carl Peters with the rulers of Usagara, Nguru, Useguha, and Ukami in November and December last, by which these territories have been ceded to him for the German Colonial Society with sovereign rights<sup>1</sup> over the same, having been laid before us, with the petition to place these territories under our suzerainty, we hereby declare that we have accepted the suzerainty, and have placed under our Imperial protection the territories in question, reserving to ourselves a right of deciding hereafter respecting any further acquisitions in the same district which may be proved to have been obtained by legal contract by the Society or by their legitimate successors.

'We grant unto the said Society, on the condition that it remains German, and that the members of the Board of Directors or other persons entrusted with its management are subjects of the German Empire, as well as to the legitimate successors of this Society under the same conditions, the authority to exercise all rights arising from the treaties submitted to us, including that of jurisdiction over both the natives and the subjects of Germany and of other nations established in those territories or sojourning there for commercial or other purposes, under the superintendence of our Government, subject to further regulations to be issued by us and supplementary additions to this our Charter of Protection.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Oberhoheit* and *Landeshoheit* in the German text.

<sup>2</sup> *Reichsanzeiger*, 3. iii. 85: English translation enclosed in Scott to Granville, 5. iii. 85: K.P. XII. pt. i. 6.

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There were several precedents, of course, for thus endowing Peters' Company with a charter for the government of tropical or sub-tropical territory; and no other nation had made more use of Chartered Companies in the course of its imperial expansion than Britain. But there was a marked difference, due perhaps to lack of experience in colonial administration, between this *Schutzbrief* and the charters granted, for example, to the Royal Niger Company in 1886 or to the British East Africa Company in 1888. To the wide powers of government bestowed on the *Gesellschaft für Deutsche Kolonisation*, Bismarck set only one condition—that the Company should be German. There were no provisions, as in those British Charters, forbidding or restricting monopolies, prohibiting the importation of firearms, ammunition or alcohol, requiring native religion to be respected and native custom to be considered in the courts, or enjoining the abolition of Slavery. The German Government was to learn in due course the possibilities of unchartered licence inherent in so jejune a document.<sup>1</sup>

The only other notable feature of the *Schutzbrief* is the nicety of its adjustment to the new-born General Act for the Congo basin. It asserts that the territories to be 'protected' are west of the Sultan's *Reich* and therefore not in 'effective occupation'; and, as Münster was quick to explain to Granville, they lay within the 'extended zone', *i.e.* the area between Lake Tanganyika and the Indian Ocean. The first article of the Act provided that free trade should be maintained in that zone if the Governments in authority therein approved, and that the signatory Powers should 'use their good offices with the Governments established on the African shore of the Indian Ocean for the purpose of obtaining such approval, and in any case of securing the most favourable conditions for the transit traffic of all nations.'<sup>2</sup> The transit traffic—there lay the weakest point in the whole design. For Peters' annexations were all inland. Between them and the sea stretched the maritime belt over which the Sultan's lordship had not yet been challenged. Clearly, then, the economic development of the new German Protectorate

<sup>1</sup> The text of the R.N.C. Charter may be found in *S.P.* lxxvii (1885-6), 1022, and that of the B.E.A.C. in *P. L. McDermott, British East Africa* (2nd ed., London, 1895), 476.

<sup>2</sup> General Act, art. i, section 3: Keith, 303.

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would be seriously hampered unless, as the Act required, no import or transit duties were levied at the Sultan's ports. Hence Rohlfs' instructions, of which Granville had been told a few days earlier, to press for the Sultan's adherence to the Act:<sup>1</sup> and hence Münster's pointed reference to it. Had not the British Government undertaken to use their 'good offices' at Zanzibar in the matter of the transit trade? Altogether, in tactics as in timing, it was a masterly exhibition of Bismarckian diplomacy.

### 4

On the afternoon of March 3 Rohlfs informed Kirk in writing that he had received a telegram from Berlin announcing the establishment of the protectorate. The news was the more disturbing since at that time Kirk had no knowledge of Peters' treaties nor of the area they covered, and Rohlfs refused to enlighten him. 'Little doubt', he wired to Granville on March 5, 'first German annexation is in Usagara'; and, seizing at once the vital point, he added, 'This indicates Dar-es-Salaam requisite port.'<sup>2</sup> Ten days later he wired again, 'Has Germany stated locality of annexation?', but it was not till March 19 that he was told by the Foreign Office what had been common knowledge in England since the publication of the *Schutzbrief* in the newspapers of March 4. 'Treaties with rulers of Usagara, Nguru, Useguha and Ukami. No limits specified.'<sup>3</sup> That was something to go upon. Those districts covered an area roughly 200 miles inland from the coast, stretching from west of Pangani to west of Dar-es-Salaam. It was a substantial acquisition, but of its value for colonial purposes there were two opinions. Herbert Bismarck, writing from London on March 7, told his father that it was 'by far the best of all your colonial settlements';<sup>4</sup> and it may well have been another tactical manoeuvre that inspired the *National Zeitung* to make little of the *Schutzbrief*, to observe with reference to the sickness among Peters' companions that 'Europeans cannot survive the climate of this part of Africa', and to recommend Germans to 'turn their

<sup>1</sup> See p. 400 above.

<sup>2</sup> K. to G., 3 and 5. iii. 85; K.P. XII. pt. i. 5.

<sup>3</sup> K. to G., 16. iii. 85; F.O. to K., 21. iii. 85; K.P. XII. pt. i. 7, 9. The F.O.'s delay in informing Kirk seems inexplicable.

<sup>4</sup> H.B. to B., 7. iii. 85; G.P. iv. 101 (G.D.D. 192).

attention to the West Coast'.<sup>1</sup> But at any rate the opinion of Fischer, the explorer, was genuine, and it was adverse. The land obtained, he bluntly declared, 'cannot be used for an agricultural colony'. It was only suitable for plantations which would absorb 'a dozen Europeans at the outside'. The climate was unhealthy. There was no produce worth exporting. The ivory trade had died out with the elephants. India-rubber was not found there. Wheat and coffee might be grown, but the precedents were not encouraging. 'In all undertakings', he concluded, 'we must reckon with reality instead of indulging in illusions.'<sup>2</sup> And an English judgment so well-informed as Holmwood's was much the same. He was then on leave in England and he told Granville that the territory Peters had acquired was 'one of the least eligible of the districts beyond the coast-land'. Its only advantage, a real one, was that it lay west of Zanzibar and cut its main trade communications with the interior.<sup>3</sup> These were expert valuations, and public opinion in general was far too ignorant of East Africa to assess what Germany had gained. If *The Times* assumed that British interests had suffered, it was mainly in order to inflame the wound inflicted on the Gladstone Ministry by the fall of Khartum. Once more we had been 'too late'.<sup>4</sup>

While the value of the territory to its new masters was thus being weighed, its old overlord was still unaware of what exactly had happened. It took several weeks for the European newspapers reporting the *Schutzbrief* to reach Zanzibar, and it was not till April 25 that Rohlfs officially informed the Sultan of it and of the area it covered.<sup>5</sup> The effect on him can be imagined. From the whole of the interior the Germans had picked out the district which mattered most to him. It lay right opposite Zanzibar. Through it ran the first stretch of the 'great west road' to Tabora and Ujiji. And for that reason, as has been seen, Barghash had not only maintained his title to overlordship there but had actually confirmed it by 'effective occupation'. 'If anywhere on the mainland His Highness exercises jurisdic-

<sup>1</sup> *N. Z.*, 3. iii. 85.

<sup>2</sup> Translation of Fischer's opinion, enclosed in Holmwood to Granville, 26. iii. 85; K.P. XII. pt. i. 13.

<sup>3</sup> H. to G., 27. iii. 85; *ibid.*, 16.

<sup>4</sup> *The Times*, 4. iii. 85.

<sup>5</sup> K. to G., 28. iv. 85, two telegrams: K.P. XII. pt. i. 23, 49.

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tion,' wrote Kirk to the Foreign Office, 'it is in Usagara where, for instance, at Mamboia on the western frontier General Mathews has for six years held a military post.'<sup>1</sup> There could be no question, therefore, of acquiescence in the *Schutzbrief*, and Barghash promptly dispatched a telegram of protest direct to the Emperor Wilhelm. 'These territories are ours', it ran, 'and we hold military stations there, and those chiefs who profess to cede sovereign rights to the agents of the Society have no authority to do so. The places are under our authority from the time of our fathers. We have, therefore, to ask Your Majesty to render justice in this. . . .'<sup>2</sup> And Barghash did more than that. Peters' treaties, it seemed, might only be the beginning of the trouble. 'Germans intend further annexation, probably Chagga,' Kirk wired to the Foreign Office: 'Denhardt has probably obtained concession from Simba.' From Simba Barghash had recently obtained assurances of loyalty, for what they were worth;<sup>3</sup> but, though he had exchanged letters and gifts with Mandara from time to time, he had never formally asserted his overlordship on the slopes of Kilimanjaro. That he should do so was, as has been seen, the British policy of the previous December; and at that time Kirk had found it none too easy to discuss the question with him. But there could be no hesitation now. Though the British plan of joint action had been abandoned, though British support, in any open or substantial form at any rate, was now unlikely, Barghash at once decided to take action on his own account. On May 1, accordingly, Mathews started with 180 of his men to establish a Zanzibar 'protectorate' on the slopes of Kilimanjaro. From Mombasa he marched to Taita, where with the assent of the villagers he hoisted the Sultan's flag, and where, too, messengers met him from Mandara and from other chiefs, welcoming his approach and declaring that they had already hoisted the scarlet flag of their own accord—prompted, one may suppose, by the news that Mathews was accompanied by troops. From Taita Mathews followed Thomson's route across the thinly populated district to the west, which he annexed in passing 'in the Sultan's name', and on June 18 he arrived at Moshi.

<sup>1</sup> K. to G., 28. iv. 85; *ibid.*, 49. For the occupation of Mamboia, see pp. 264-5 above.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 403 above.

'On the third day [he reported], having made a flagstaff, Mandara called together his elders and the people, and before them and the soldiers of the expedition I hoisted the Sultan's flag and placed Mandara and his people under the Sultan's protection.' A short and simple declaration to that effect was signed by Mathews and Mandara and twenty-four other chiefs from Taveta, Arusha, Pare and other neighbouring districts. 'We, the Sultans of Chagga and Kilimanjaro, do, in the presence of General Mathews and his soldiers and followers, swear that we are subjects of His Highness the Sultan of Zanzibar and that we hoist his flag in the towns of our country to prove our loyalty and that we recognise him as our Suzerain.'<sup>1</sup>

That this was a more valid engagement than those which Peters had secured and Jühlke was presently to secure may be inferred first from the fact that Mathews was a fluent speaker of Swahili, the *lingua franca* of the coast and the adjacent parts of the interior, and secondly from the fact that some of Mandara's elders and similar deputations from other chiefs accompanied Mathews back to Zanzibar to confirm the Sultan's suzerainty over their country. 'The German consul', wrote Kirk, reporting the return of the expedition, 'has been to call on Mathews and congratulate him. I had the people [*i.e.* the elders] here and shewed them all my things. I gave them a bullock. They sucked its blood and ate a bit raw, then cooked the rest. Mathews says it is a nice country and a pity if we lose it, but the fertile part is thickly peopled already and land not to be had in any amount without fighting.'<sup>2</sup>

On his return journey by way of the Pangani valley Mathews had sighted a European expedition which quickly broke camp on his approach and marched away. It was Jühlke, bound for Taveta and intending, as will be seen, to do in a different manner for Germany what Mathews had done for Zanzibar.<sup>3</sup>

## 5

Meantime Malet had reported to the Foreign Office that the Sultan's protest had caused 'considerable irritation' in Berlin,

<sup>1</sup> Account of expedition: K. to G., 3. vii. 85, enclosing text of declaration, dated 30. v. 85: K.P. XII. pt. ii. 39.

<sup>2</sup> K. to C. Hill: 7. vii. 85: K.P., *misc.*

<sup>3</sup> K. to G., 3. vii. 85: K.P. XII. pt. ii. 37. For the expedition, see also R. N. Lyne, *An Apostle of Empire*, chap. vii.

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especially as it had been addressed directly to the Emperor and had been made—so Rohlfs had cabled—at Kirk's instigation. Kirk was promptly asked for an explanation and replied: 'Protest spontaneous. Sultan wished to follow in person. I dissuaded him.'<sup>1</sup> And Kirk's attitude to Mathews' mission had been equally correct. Remembering the scheme for joint action which Granville had proposed six months earlier, he had asked if the vice-consul at Mombasa should accompany the mission inland. 'Sultan's action at Chagga', came the answer, 'must be spontaneous. Vice-consul should not accompany.'<sup>2</sup> When, again, the deputations from the Kilimanjaro district came to Zanzibar and delivered messages for Kirk—since, as he explained, 'the British Agency commands in these parts an influence only second to that of His Highness'—he pleaded that it was 'impossible to ignore altogether the courtesy of those chiefs with whom in many ways I have for years had friendly relations. . . . But I shall keep as far as may be in the background, since by coming forward in a manner more advantageous for British interests and influence here I might probably give cause of offence in other quarters.'<sup>3</sup> Discretion itself; but the offence was none the less inevitable. For very soon, if not already, Bismarck was convinced that in East Africa as in West the chief obstacle to his colonial designs was the lack of sympathy with which they were regarded by British officials on the spot. And in East Africa there was more truth in this belief. With one possible exception to be recorded presently Kirk maintained from first to last the sort of aloofness or neutrality which has just been described, however little it accorded with his old intimacy with Barghash. Nor did he ever attempt to evade or circumvent his instructions, however unwise he thought them. But he never on the other hand concealed his opinion as to the extent of German ambitions or the methods adopted to achieve them, and in a series of telegrams and dispatches he strove to make his chiefs in Whitehall realise what was happening as clearly as he did himself.

<sup>1</sup> M. to G., 28, iv. 85; K. to G., 1. v. 85; K.P. XII. pt. i. 23, 27. The German Government, whose suspicions had been excited by the good English of the protest, were finally convinced that Mathews, not Kirk, was responsible for it. Memo. by Anderson, 7. v. 85; F.O. 84. 1738.

<sup>2</sup> K. to G. and G. to K., 1. v. 85; *ibid.*, 27.

<sup>3</sup> K. to G., 3. 7. 85; K.P. XII. pt. ii. 37.

The first of these was a dispatch of May 9. 'If neither England nor France', he wrote, 'consider their interests and historical associations here worth defending or if they are for the time so preoccupied elsewhere as to be unable to attend to events here, the Sultan cannot stand alone, and he will soon see that the longer he opposes German aspirations, the more he will lose. If left to his own resources, his real interests lie in a speedy surrender, and this is what I believe the German consul is now working for.'<sup>1</sup> The second warning followed on May 18 by cable. 'Collision in the district already annexed probable. German agents elsewhere active. Sultan helpless. Unofficial influence used to induce him to place himself under Germany. French consul passive. Her Majesty's Government must be prepared for possible consequences.'<sup>2</sup> A clear enough warning, but it had no effect whatever on the Foreign Office. 'Provided that British interests are not injured', Granville answered, 'or the Sultan's established rights infringed'—his claims in Usagara, it would seem, had already been prejudged—'Her Majesty's Government are favourable to German enterprise in districts not occupied by any civilised power.' There followed a gentle admonition. 'Her Majesty's Government fully appreciate your zeal and discretion, but wish to impress on you that any marked opposition to German action in the present temper of the German Government will convert a mere commercial speculation into a political question.'<sup>3</sup> A mere commercial speculation? In Berlin at any rate it was rapidly assuming a graver character; for, a week later, the German press reported that a naval squadron would shortly rendezvous at Zanzibar,<sup>4</sup> and on the same day Granville cabled to Kirk that 'Bismarck threatens to declare war unless troops are withdrawn from German-protected territory'. Kirk was to 'use his best influence' to procure the withdrawal of any troops sent into the German area since the issue of the *Schutzbrief*. There were no fresh troops, of course, as Kirk explained, in the area in question. Kilimanjaro lay far outside it.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> K. to G., 9. v. 85: K.P. XII. pt. i. 69.

<sup>2</sup> K. to G., 18. v. 85: *ibid.*, 46.

<sup>3</sup> G. to K., 20. v. 85: *ibid.*, 46. The unofficial influence was presumably that of German and possibly other business-men at Zanzibar.

<sup>4</sup> Malet to G., 28. v. 85; *ibid.*, 52 B.

<sup>5</sup> G. to K., 27. v. 85: K. to G., 28. v. 85: K.P. XII. pt. i. 50, 52.



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A little further light, meanwhile, had been thrown on the character of the 'commercial speculation'. Rohlfs, it appeared, had now got to grips with the primary task of his mission to Zanzibar. Towards the end of May he had asked the Sultan to renew the existing commercial treaty which had been concluded with the Hanseatic League in 1859, but with one drastic amendment: the transit of German goods through the Sultan's ports was to be free. When he heard of this, Kirk frankly accosted Rohlfs and pointed out to him that, since the traders of all other nations having treaties with Zanzibar would have to share in any concession made to Germans, the Sultan would be deprived of the one means of taxing foreigners which he and his predecessors had possessed—the five per cent. duty on imports.<sup>1</sup> Rohlfs, it seems, was impressed, and when Kirk saw the text of the proposed new treaty, he found it only differed from the old in one or two small points such as a provision requiring both contracting Governments to furnish their subjects with passports for travel in their respective territories.<sup>2</sup> But, small or not, Barghash declined to give any other undertakings than those given in the treaties with other nations. With that Rohlfs presently professed himself content. He asked Kirk to support his request for a simple renewal of the Hanseatic Treaty; and, obeying his instructions, Kirk assented. There, for the moment, the negotiations halted. A graver and less 'commercial' crisis had intervened.

The trouble which Kirk had long seen brewing in the north had come suddenly to a head. Since the previous autumn, it will be remembered, Kirk had watched with growing anxiety the proceedings of the brothers Denhardt at Witu and he had not been reassured by the visit of the *Gneisenau* to Lamu. More rumours had trickled in to Zanzibar till at last Kirk felt himself justified in breaking his self-imposed neutrality. On April 3, in answer to a letter he had received from Simba,<sup>3</sup> he wrote repeating what Barghash had told that rascally old chief—namely, that he would be confirmed in his authority at Witu if he hoisted the Sultan's flag—and warning him against Europeans

<sup>1</sup> K. to G., 28. v. 85; K.P. XII. pt. ii. 8.

<sup>2</sup> G. to K., 30. v. 85; *ibid.*, 11.

<sup>3</sup> This letter cannot be traced. Presumably its tenor was similar to that of Simba's letters to Barghash, cited p. 403, note 2 above.

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'who encourage you to rebellion against His Highness the Seyyid'. 'If any Europeans come to you saying they have been sent by me, do not believe it unless they have my letter. We have heard there are people with you making intrigue; but my advice to you is to follow Seyyid Barghash: otherwise you will suffer.'<sup>1</sup>

There was nothing improper, of course, in this communication. Kirk was simply pursuing the policy he had followed consistently since 1873—the policy of maintaining the integrity of Barghash's dominions. When, similarly, about the same time, an Arab chief from the neighbourhood of Aden, having occupied Obbia, a landing-place between Warsheikh and Ras Hafun, came to Zanzibar and paid his respects to Barghash, Kirk advised him to acquiesce in the Sultan's claim to a formal overlordship. Obbia, it was true, lay beyond the northern limit of the Zanzibar dominions; but Kirk suggested—the more pointedly after hearing that the chief had visited Rohlfs and accepted gifts from him—that a place so near the Sultan's boundaries might easily be used 'to create trouble further south' from which the Sultan might not be the only sufferer.<sup>2</sup> The security of the Sultan's realm—Kirk was himself, no doubt, the most ardent champion of that policy, but it had been wholeheartedly accepted by his successive chiefs at the Foreign Office. For more than forty years, indeed, ever since Consul Hamerton had first hoisted the British flag at Zanzibar in 1841, it had been the cardinal principle of all British dealings with East Africa. At every crisis, at every foreign threat to the Sultan's independence, it had been firmly maintained. In December 1884, it is true, the British Government had decided to take no active part in affirming the Sultan's overlordship in the interior; but that had not affected the recognition accorded for more than sixty years past to his dominion on the coast. Nor was there any doubt as yet about the extent of that dominion. The British Treaties of 1821 and 1839 had fixed its southern frontier at Cape Delgado but stated no limit to the north.<sup>3</sup> Seyyid Said

<sup>1</sup> K. to Simba, 3. iv. 85, enclosed in K. to G., 23. vi. 85: K.P. XII. pt. ii. 32 D.

<sup>2</sup> K. to G., 11. iv. 85, enclosing notes exchanged between Barghash and Yusuf Ali, 10. iv. 85: K.P. XII. pt. i. 30-1. Barghash waived his normal rights in the matter of customs duties and his flag. Yusuf Ali was to remain at Obbia 'watching over our interests, and whatever nation interferes with him does so with us'.

<sup>3</sup> *East Africa and its Invaders*, 215, 481-2.

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himself had put it at Mogadishu in a formal letter to the Foreign Secretary in 1844;<sup>1</sup> and the Treaty of 1845, though, like its predecessors, it was not concerned to define the exact extent of Said's dominions, at least assumed that Lamu lay within them.<sup>2</sup> In 1860 an exact definition was needed for the Canning Arbitration, and Coghlan supplied it—'from Mogadishu on the north to Cape Delgado on the south.'<sup>3</sup> The next authoritative statement, Frere's in 1873, extended the limits a few miles at each end. 'The Sultan of Zanzibar', he declared, 'has possessions extending about 660 miles from Tungi, the frontier of the Portuguese territory beyond Cape Delgado, on the south to Warsheikh, about 2° 30' north, which is the most advanced post actually held by his troops and under his flag to the north.'<sup>4</sup> Frere described the Sultan's control of the seaboard as insubstantial, but, as has been seen in Chapter XII, it was greatly strengthened after 1873—at every important point from Warsheikh southwards there were soon a Governor and a garrison or at least a picket of soldiers and a flag—and in 1875-6 it was the British Government's unequivocal acceptance of it, particularly on the Somali coast, which decided the Egyptian issue in favour of Barghash and Kirk and against Ismail and Gordon. And all the time, of course, or at any rate since 1845 the British naval patrols had taken the Sultan's overlordship on the coast at least as far north as Mogadishu for granted as the necessary basis of their fight with the Slave Trade. There was no doubt at all, then, at the beginning of 1885 as to the validity or extent of the sea-side Zanzibar realm the independence of which the British Government were pledged to respect; and how could Kirk suppose that it was no longer his duty as their agent to do anything he legitimately could to see it was respected? That time-honoured policy had been confirmed—or so it seemed—only a few months before Kirk wrote to Simba, when he was told to elicit from Barghash the promise that he would cede no territory without consulting the British Government. No hint of any change of attitude had reached him. No new orders had arrived. It was one thing for Granville to support German 'commercial

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, 454; cf. 510.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 153 above.

<sup>3</sup> C. to G. of B., 1. xi. 60: 1871 *Committee*, p. 114.

<sup>4</sup> Memorandum on Sultan's authority, enclosed in F. to G., 7. v. 73; K.P. IIa. 185.

speculations', to tell him to back Rohlfs' negotiations for a treaty, to bid him accept the annexation of inland Usagara as a *fait accompli* and not to give offence about it. But it was quite another thing to contemplate the foreign annexation—for it might well come to that—of a district on the coast. So Kirk naturally assumed, when he wrote to Simba, that he was doing what the Foreign Office would have wished him to do. He was soon to discover with dismay that he was wrong.

Early in June it was known at Zanzibar that Simba had succumbed to German pressure. A few weeks earlier Clemens Denhardt had 'denied categorically having any political objects in connexion with his expedition, disowned any mission such as that of the agents of the German Colonisation Society, and was known to have received, as the leader of a purely scientific enterprise, the assistance of the Sultan and at the request of his consul [Rohlfs] a remission of customs duty on goods which were, we now learn, to be used to buy over the Chief of Witu.' Denhardt had made that disavowal in May; but now he coolly told Kirk that on April 15 Simba had agreed to change, as he put it, 'the covenant of friendship which has existed with Germany since 1867 into a protectorate' covering Witu and the neighbouring Swahili lands.<sup>1</sup> On applying to Rohlfs Kirk was informed that the German Emperor had duly confirmed the agreement.<sup>2</sup> Barghash, of course, protested. This was the first he had heard of Brenner's compact; but without the approval of Majid as overlord of all the coast it had no more validity in his eyes than had the new agreement without his approval. He denounced the 'protectorate'; he even threatened to send ships and troops to Lamu; and, when Rohlfs responded with a 'counter-protest', he replied—so Rohlfs complained—'in a most unbecoming manner'.<sup>3</sup> But Barghash might well have been allowed a little plain speaking: for there was nothing else he could do. He could no more take back Witu from the Germans than he could take back Usagara. To Kirk at any rate the moral was plain and he took occasion to address his third warning to the Foreign Office. 'It would assist me much', he cabled

<sup>1</sup> K. to G., 9. vi. 85, enclosing C.D. to K., 7. vi. 85; K. to G., 23. vi. 85: K.P. XII. pt. ii. 21, 32 B. See p. 114 above.

<sup>2</sup> R. to K., 9. vi. 85: *ibid.*, 32 C.

<sup>3</sup> Bismarck to Münster, 2. vi. 85; Malet to G., 6. vi. 85: K.P. XII. pt. i. 65-7.

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on June 4, 'did I know whether under any circumstances British Government, in case of opportunity offering, could now consider acquisition or protectorate of a district with a naval port. I mention this believing that Zanzibar must soon break up or pass bodily to Germany.'<sup>1</sup> To that pertinent question Kirk got no answer. He received instead an anxious query as to whether he had written another letter to Simba since that of April 3, the gist of which he had dutifully reported. 'No,' he replied; but in fact it was that letter of April 3 that had caused the trouble. Simba had shown it to the Germans, and its contents had soon become known in Berlin.<sup>2</sup> Naturally it confirmed Bismarck's suspicions and he made the most of it in London. 'I fear Kirk did warn the "Lion" against Denhardt,' Sir Percy Anderson, head of the legal department at the Foreign Office, ruefully admitted. Yet as he himself pointed out to Malet, Kirk could not have known that the German Government were interested in those secret negotiations at Witu: he was only warning Simba against 'unauthorised foreigners' asking for concessions.<sup>3</sup>

This little 'breeze' had not affected Kirk's prestige. The Foreign Office were well aware by now of his general attitude to the German invasion of East Africa; and they doubtless regretted it; for they knew it made it harder to keep on good terms with Bismarck. But, whatever might happen to subordinate officials, Kirk's reputation was far too high and old-established to permit of his being lightly sacrificed to the displeasure of a foreign Government. The real importance of the incident was in the evidence it gave of the way the wind was blowing in Whitehall. The Foreign Office, it seemed, was wholly on the defensive. It was useless for Kirk to explain that Simba had explicitly accepted the Sultan's overlordship and that he only ruled the town of Witu and had no authority over the neighbouring Swahili just as his ancestors had only ruled

<sup>1</sup> K. to G., 4. vi. 85; *ibid.*, 61.

<sup>2</sup> Herbert Bismarck wrote to Rosebery (17. vi. 85): 'Kirk has written to the Sultan of Witu that he had reason to believe that another Power might take steps to offer him a protectorate, and has in the meantime strongly advised him to put himself under the British protectorate [*sic*]. The Sultan of Witu has sent Kirk's letter to our agent.' G.D. 29. 117.

<sup>3</sup> G. to Malet and G. to K., 13. vi. 85; K. to G., 14. vi. 85; Hatzfeldt to Malet, 17. vi. 85; A. to M., 24. vi. 85; K.P. XII. pt. i. 81-97.

the town of Pate and not the island.<sup>1</sup> No effort whatever was made in London to uphold the Sultan's rights or to justify Kirk's attempt to protect them.

6

Usagara had gone, Witu had gone, and apparently the process of dismemberment was not yet complete. On June 20 Rohlfs asked Kirk for his support in renewing pressure on the Sultan to withdraw his troops from the protected area. What was that area? Kirk asked him. It covered Mamboia, answered Rohlfs, and 'the coast opposite Zanzibar'! Kirk at once cabled for instructions as to how he should treat this new and alarming claim. 'If Zanzibar claim to military station is worthless, that to others inland must be abandoned: and admission of German rights to sovereignty on coast opposite undermines every Zanzibar coast claim elsewhere.'<sup>2</sup> This time the Foreign Office did take action. Inquiries were made in Berlin; and Bismarck admitted that the German territory, while it included Mamboia, did not extend to the coast. More than that, he would not insist on the immediate evacuation of 'long established military stations'. 'This point is waived for the present.'<sup>3</sup>

In the immediate vicinity of Zanzibar, then, the coast seemed safe for the moment; but within a week a disquieting report came in from the north. 'Signs of German schemes in Mombasa district,' Kirk wired on June 27. 'Rebel Mbaruk asks for British protection. If refused, says that he has other friends. Possesses no territory, but indefinite claims and influence.' Salisbury had just taken over the Foreign Office from Granville, and taken over with it, seemingly, his attitude to East African affairs. He told Kirk to 'act with great caution'. 'You should not permit any communications of a hostile tone to be addressed to German agents or representatives by Zanzibar authorities.' Kirk obediently replied that he had 'urged Sultan strongly in that sense' and had rejected Mbaruk's application.<sup>4</sup> Meantime it seemed that after all the German Government had no designs

<sup>1</sup> K. to G., 23. vi. 85; K.P. XII. pt. ii. 32 B.

<sup>2</sup> K. to G., 20. vi. 85; K.P. XII. pt. i. 88.

<sup>3</sup> G. to Malet, 20. vi. 85; M. to G., 22. vi. 85; *ibid.*, 88, 94.

<sup>4</sup> K. to S., 27. vi. 85; S. to K., 28. vi. 85; K. to S., 2. vii. 85; K.P. XII. pt. ii. 4, 6.

on the coast apart from Witu which was near it but not on it. For at the end of June the German ambassador told Salisbury that his Government was willing to adhere to the Anglo-French Declaration of 1862. 'This', said Salisbury, 'I thought would be a very good arrangement.' Kirk agreed, with one proviso—'*if the whole coast be included and limits inland definite.*'<sup>1</sup>

At this moment Kirk may have felt that the ground beneath his feet, though far from safe as his proviso showed, had become a little steadier, and it seemed steadier still when Mathews returned to Zanzibar on July 3 with his good news from Kili-manjaro. Another week passed, and another, and nothing happened. No more was heard of that German squadron. The only event was a change at the German consulate. Rohlf's had been recalled from Zanzibar—they could not trust him to be tactful, was Herbert Bismarck's curious comment<sup>2</sup>—and on July 18 Travers, promoted from Canton, arrived to take his place.<sup>3</sup> That was all Kirk had to report except some unpleasant evidence of a revival of the Slave Trade. No less than five dhows had been caught by Mathews with slaves in them on the coast just opposite Zanzibar. Kirk had no doubt that this sudden recrudescence of the old evil in that area was due to the uncertainty created by German claims as to whose writ ran there, and he feared it would be impossible now to induce Barghash to take the one further step required to eliminate the Trade, the abolition of the legal status of Slavery throughout his dominions. 'His Highness seems little disposed further to complicate his compromised position at the present time by adding to his difficulties a social revolution.'<sup>4</sup> But, if a new edge had been given to the old problem, a dispatch about the Slave Trade must have taken Kirk's mind back to the days, so recently gone by, of his peaceful and beneficent co-operation with Barghash. He wrote it on August 1. Another quiet week, and then, in quick succession, two more shocks.

On August 7 five German warships, *Stosch*, *Gneisenau*, *Prinz Adalbert*, *Elizabeth* and *Ehrenfels*, cast anchor off Zanzibar.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> S. to Malet, 30. vi. 85; K. to S., 2. vii. 85; *ibid.*, 5.

<sup>2</sup> Malet to G., 24. v. and 6. vi. 85; K.P. XII. pt. i. 47, 67. Scott to San-  
derson, 6. vi. 85; G.D., 29. 179.

<sup>3</sup> K. to S., 18. vii. 85; K.P. XII. pt. ii. 28.

<sup>4</sup> K. to S., 1. viii. 85; *ibid.*, 70. <sup>5</sup> K. to S., 8. viii. 85; K.P. XII. pt. ii. 47.

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On August 8 Kirk received the following cable from the Foreign Office. 'Times telegram from Berlin states Dr. Jühlke concluded ten treaties placing Kilimanjaro, Usambara, Chagga, etc. under German protection since Mathews' visit. That Mandara denied having ceded his country to Zanzibar. Have you any information? Reply at once.'<sup>1</sup> 'Have been prepared for report,' Kirk answered, 'which I believe is a pure invention of Jühlke & Co. Have myself seen Chagga agents sent here by chiefs who witnessed the treaties and hoisting the Zanzibar flag.'<sup>2</sup> None the less Kirk recognised the danger. If Jühlke produced treaties, whether fabricated or not, Bismarck might back them as he had backed Peters' treaties, and that might mean, if the British Government's indifference continued, the transference of another vast area, more attractive and productive than Usagara, from the 'protection' of Zanzibar to that of Germany. Jühlke, of course, did produce treaties, eight of them, ceding 'sovereignty' to the German East Africa Company<sup>3</sup> and signed by Mandara and sundry other chiefs; and he had appended to each a circumstantial account of his dealings with the chief concerned. Mandara, for instance, had welcomed his arrival as the fulfilment of his old friend von der Decken's promise 'to bring white people to my country'. 'I love the Germans above other people', he had suitably declared, 'and in particular above Englishmen and Arabs.' When asked why the Sultan's flag was flying in his village, he said that Mathews had recently been there with 180 soldiers and had given him 600 rupees to hoist the flag. It did not mean that he was subject to Zanzibar: he was as free as the Sultan and 'perhaps of equal power'. The flag was only a sign of his friendship with him. Now, he went on, he would hoist the German flag if Jühlke would bring him a better flagstaff than Mathews had set up.<sup>4</sup>

The validity of these documents was not to go undisputed. At the end of 1885 two British missionaries, the Rev. E. Fitch

<sup>1</sup> S. to K., 8. viii. 85: *ibid.*, 48.

<sup>2</sup> K. to S., 9. viii. 85: *ibid.*, 49.

<sup>3</sup> This Company grew out of the German Colonisation Society, and took over its activities in East Africa.

<sup>4</sup> Papers respecting Dr. Carl Jühlke's treaties, communicated to F.O. by Baron von Plessen, 28. viii. 85: *ibid.*, 73 ff. Mathews admitted giving Mandara 50 rupees when he asked for a 'good-bye' gift: Lyne, 74.



and the Rev. J. Wray, who had recently established a C.M.S. station at Chagga, questioned Mandara about Jühlke's visit. He stoutly denied almost everything that Jühlke had said. In particular he had not hoisted the German flag. He had declined to do so without Seyyid Barghash's leave. He had put it in a tin box, and there it had lain ever since. The Germans were people of *mitambo* (deceit), who had robbed the Seyyid of land and now wanted to rob him. . . .<sup>1</sup> Both missionaries were doubtful of Mandara's good faith—'he is playing on two strings'—and the criticism of the other treaties was weightier. Again the critic was a British missionary, Archdeacon J. P. Farler, who had been alarmed, it will be remembered, at the stories he had heard of Stanley's doings. He had taken part in founding the U.M.C.A. station in Usambara in 1875 and, having stayed there ever since, he was well acquainted with the chiefs and headmen of the country.<sup>2</sup> On the Kilimanjaro treaties he gave no opinion, but he described those made in Usambara as 'not treaties in any sense of the word' and worthless. To begin with, the suzerainty of Zanzibar over the whole territory was incontestable. The Sultan kept a garrison in his fort on Mount Tongwe above the Pangani valley.<sup>3</sup> Local disputes were customarily referred to the Sultan's Governor at Pangani for settlement, and tribute was also occasionally paid to him. In the second place, the signatories had no right to cede territory. They were all 'petty chiefs' or 'headmen' of small villages. 'It is amusing', wrote Farler, 'to find those petty negroes dubbed "Sultans".' One of them was the 'headman' in a village of about thirty huts, directly under the fort on Mount Tongwe, and inhabited only by his own large family and slaves. Another could not even be called a 'headman' as his village had only slaves in it. Another was the brother of the two real chiefs of Usambara, Samboia and Kibanga, who both openly acknowledged the Sultan's suzerainty. Kibanga indeed had journeyed to Zanzibar in 1883 with some of his elders in order to do homage. Samboia having rejected his advances, Jühlke had persuaded the third brother, a man of no importance otherwise, to sign a treaty on Samboia's behalf.

<sup>1</sup> F. and W. to Kirk, 13. xii. 85, enclosed in K. to Salisbury, 8. i. 86: K.P. XII. pt. iv. 68.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 361 above. Farler was made Archdeacon of Magila in 1879.

<sup>3</sup> For Seyyid Said's erection of this fort, see *East Africa and its Invaders*, 352, n. 1.

'This to me', says Farler, 'is the worst bit of the whole business.' And lastly, Farler averred, those 'Sultans' had no notion they were giving anything away. 'They maintain that the Wazungu or "white men" merely asked for leave to live and plant in the country, and then asked them to put a mark on a piece of paper to show that they were friends.'<sup>1</sup> . . . Jühlke *versus* Farler—historians are not often confronted with so sharp a conflict of evidence.

7

The arrival of the German squadron was the first clear proof at Zanzibar that Bismarck had got his way. But in fact the issue had been decided in London more than six months earlier. Before the end of January the increasing gravity of the international situation—the tension in Egypt, the triumph of the Mahdi, the menace of war with Russia—had convinced the British Government that they could not afford to quarrel with Germany. Gladstone, indeed, had persuaded himself that German expansion overseas was a British interest. Three days after the fall of Khartum he wrote to Granville: 'I see my way clearly to this, that German colonisation will strengthen and not weaken our hold upon our colonies.'<sup>2</sup> The text of this letter was New Guinea, and Gladstone was referring in the language of his day to the Australian colonies. But, if he could find reasons for his acceptance of German claims in the Pacific, he could hardly resist them in East Africa where there was no colonial public opinion to be combatted. From that moment Barghash's fate was sealed. The 'forward party' in the Cabinet acquiesced. Kimberley ceased to champion Indian interests, and even omitted to consult the Government of India.<sup>3</sup> All along the line a process of withdrawal began from the position taken up a little earlier. The firm dispatch of January 14 was virtually torn up on February 14.<sup>4</sup> The *Schutzbrief* of March 3 provoked no adverse comment. On the contrary, Herbert Bismarck told his father that 'public opinion here in London will . . . accept your settlements (*Niederlassungen*) . . . behind Zanzibar, if you allow

<sup>1</sup> Farler's Memorandum on Dr. Jühlke's treaties, enclosed in S. to K., 21. xi. 85; K.P. XII. pt. iii. 53.

<sup>2</sup> Gl. to Gr., 29. i. 85; G.D., 29. 129.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 434, note 2, below.

<sup>4</sup> See pp. 399-400 above.

the greatest possible freedom of trade'. He had talked to several ministers, including Dilke, and found none of them unfriendly to Germany's colonial aspirations. Gladstone had gone so far as to say, in the course of a brief after-dinner talk, that, 'if there were no colonial movement in Germany, he would beg us to create one,' provided that colonial questions were kept apart from international politics.<sup>1</sup> In a debate on the Foreign Office vote of March 12 most of the speakers harped on the theme of German friendship. 'On the part of Her Majesty's Government', said Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, 'there is nothing except an anxious desire to meet the views of the German Government, and we fully believe that our good feeling is reciprocated by the Government of that great Empire.' And Gladstone was even more emphatic. 'If Germany becomes a colonising power, all I can say is "God speed her"'.<sup>2</sup> In the light of these pronouncements the sequence of warning messages to Kirk is easier to understand—the instructions at the end of March to make friends with Rohlfs, and the instructions in April and May to acquiesce in the occupation of Usagara and avoid irritating Bismarck by opposing his 'commercial' plans. There was only one thing, indeed, that Bismarck wanted and did not get. A plain hint he gave on May 24 that Mathews ought to be recalled was not taken, though Malet backed it, for the simple reason that the 'General' was no longer in British service.<sup>3</sup> So it is not surprising that by the end of May Bismarck felt the time had come to settle the East African question as he chose and on his own. On the 27th the German press was allowed to publish that report about a naval squadron going to Zanzibar.<sup>4</sup> It was not to 'make war', Malet was told, but only 'to bring the Sultan to a more correct bearing'.<sup>5</sup> Even to those who knew Bismarck's methods this cool announcement that he was going to coerce the Sultan must have seemed a rather startling breach of diplomatic propriety. Was not Barghash the friend and *protégé* of Britain? And the brusque move seemed still more disquieting when Malet learned that Bismarck interpreted his earlier promises to respect the integrity of the Sultan's realm as applying

<sup>1</sup> H.B. to B., 7. iii. 85: G.P. iv. 101.

<sup>2</sup> *Hansard*, 3rd series, ccxcv. 964, 979.

<sup>3</sup> M. to G., 24. v. 85: K.P. XII. pt. i. 48.

<sup>4</sup> M. to G., 28. v. 85: *ibid.*, 52 B.

<sup>5</sup> M. to G., 30. v. 85: *ibid.*, 53.

only to Zanzibar and Pemba. The 'Zanzibar dominions', it now appeared, meant simply the island of Zanzibar and its consort. The mainland was just East Africa, and the Sultan had no authority on it except, perhaps, at one or two ports.<sup>1</sup> So the mask was off. The pretence that Germany was only seeking the same sort of commercial footing in East Africa as that enjoyed by Britain, France and the United States had been dropped. Bismarck, in fact, had openly and directly challenged the championship of the Sultan's rights which Britain had sustained for half a century. To acquiesce, wrote Malet, means 'a complete reversal of our previous policy with regard to the Sultan which I apprehend to have been to consolidate his power on the mainland'. Yet, 'if we cannot or will not work with Germany, we shall be in a very awkward position because the German protectorate will be made effective despite us and our influence with the Sultan must collapse, to say nothing of the chances of Zanzibar being bombarded.'<sup>2</sup> It was true. Only an open rupture with Germany, only the sending of British ships to counter German ships at Zanzibar as they had been sent to counter French ships in 1859, could avail to save the Sultan. And that was not to be thought of. The diplomatic structure so carefully built up and tended by Kirk for the past twelve years had collapsed at one blow of Bismarck's fist.

Bismarck, however, had no intention of abusing his advantage. He was taking a high hand with Britain, but he did not wish to alienate her. The prospects of a genuine French *entente* were not encouraging. A British *entente* was the alternative. He accepted, therefore, the two proposals which the British Government put forward to cover their retreat. The first was a suggestion made by Lord Rosebery who was in Berlin, as it happened, a few days before Bismarck's *coup*, charged by Gladstone and Granville to take unofficial soundings as to the possibilities of an all-round settlement of Anglo-German differences.<sup>3</sup> He recommended that 'the two Governments should appoint commissioners to investigate what are the just limits of the Sultan's dominions'. If that could be ar-

<sup>1</sup> M. to G., 4. vi. 85; K.P. XII. pt. i. 63.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Marquess of Crewe, *Lord Rosebery* (London, 1931), i. 239-41.

ranged, he told Granville, and the German territorial claims precisely mapped, 'an easy and peaceable settlement would be arrived at, detrimental to the dignity of neither party [was not Barghash a third?] and infinitely valuable as regards the future relations of the two countries.'<sup>1</sup> Granville at once adopted this suggestion, and on June 3 Bismarck provisionally accepted it, provided that the joint inquiry were not concerned with the recognition of the German protectorate—a question which concerned the German Emperor and the Sultan alone.<sup>2</sup> On June 20 a map of the protectorate was forthcoming, but it did not purport to be final. No western boundaries could yet be fixed, and even in the area nearer the sea Bismarck observed to Malet that, 'German explorers were still on their travels in those parts and might have made further acquisitions'.<sup>3</sup>

The second British proposal had been made at an earlier stage of the dispute, and, though it was presently to prove of primary historical importance, it had fallen into the background at this time. It might have seemed, indeed, that the idea of establishing British 'influence' on the slopes of Kilimanjaro, even by Kirk's method of confirming the Sultan's suzerainty over Chagga, had been dropped for good and all in January. But Consul Holmwood, who, as has been noted, was home on leave in England in the spring, was as anxious as Kirk to set a limit to German acquisitions in East Africa and, if indeed a 'general scramble' for its territory and trade were imminent, to obtain a substantial share for Britain. He tried, accordingly, to revive the flagging interest which a group of British businessmen had shown a few years previously in East Africa; and early in April he wrote to Hutton suggesting the resumption of MacKinnon's project of 1878 on new lines. Unaware as yet of German designs on Kilimanjaro, he proposed a British move inland from the coast parallel to the German move in Usagara. A concession should be obtained from the Sultan for the development of the port of Tanga and the building of a railway therefrom to the foot of the mountain, which might be extended later on to link up with steamers on the Great Lakes and the upper Nile

<sup>1</sup> R. to G., 30. v. 85; G.D. 29. 117.

<sup>2</sup> G. to M., 1. vi. 85; M. to G., 3. vi. 85; H.B. to M., 3. vi. 85; K.P. XII. pt. i. 55-6, 64.

<sup>3</sup> M. to G., 3 and 20. vi. 85; *ibid.*, 56, 92.

so as to bring Khartum within a fortnight's journey of Zanzibar. By that means a vast area—it was one day to be known as Kenya Colony—would be drawn within the scope of British enterprise. The export of its existing resources, including the ivory to be got round the Lakes, would be diverted from the old trade routes to the railway, and a variety of new products would spring from its rich soil—wheat, maize, tea, cocoa, chincona, coffee, vanilla, opium and tobacco—not to mention the stock that could be raised on healthy uplands free from tse-tse fly, or the minerals that doubtless lay beneath the surface. Apart from the Masai, moreover, the natives of the country were mostly robust and industrious agriculturists, ready, no doubt, to sell their labour under European supervision, and likely to provide a better market for British goods than their neighbours in the south.<sup>1</sup> Last, but not least, Thomson's great journey of the previous year had revealed that the highlands westwards of Mount Kenya were almost ideally suited, in climate, in fertility, in natural beauty, for European settlement. 'A more charming region', he had said, 'is probably not to be found in all Africa, not even in Abyssinia'—undulating uplands at a general elevation of 6,000 feet, varied and lovely scenery, forest-crowned mountains, downland clothed with heather and flowering shrubs, park-like country with cattle wandering knee-deep in the luxuriant grass, a network of babbling brooks and streams, a land, in fact, where there was 'little to suggest the popular idea of the tropics'. Here surely, argued Holmwood, was a new field for European emigration, for a European colony. Pending its foundation, the economic development of the country should be entrusted to a powerful company such as had been contemplated in the 1878 concession. Otherwise it will be 'inundated by smaller trading bodies and adventurers of all nationalities' who will seek immediate profit without considering the future welfare of the country or the interests of its population. A 'British East Africa Association' should be constituted, with or without a charter from the British Government, to operate, as far as circumstances permitted, on the lines of the old East India Company.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See p. 321 above *re* the effects of the climate on the demand for heavy textiles.

<sup>2</sup> Holmwood to Hutton, 10. iv. 85; K.P. XII. pt. i. 33-43.

Thomson would not have subscribed to quite such a glowing prospectus of the Kenya Highlands; but it was his discovery of them which had given new life to the old idea, Gordon's idea, of linking the Nile with the Indian Ocean. The unknown land had proved to be much more than a corridor: it might even become a colony; and at least it seemed a commercial proposition. So Hutton consulted the indispensable Mackinnon, and on April 22, with Lord Aberdare and five co-signatories, they addressed a spirited letter to Granville. They enclosed copies of Holmwood's scheme and of the old Mackinnon Concession, and they respectfully declared the 'immediate adoption' of their proposals to be 'absolutely essential to maintain and extend British influence in East Africa, to develop British trade, and to deal in a practical manner with the Slave Trade of the interior'. No time, they said, was to be lost; but before embarking capital on the project they wanted an assurance of the Government's 'countenance and support'.<sup>1</sup>

If Mackinnon and Granville had taken a leaf from the book which Peters and Bismarck had just written, the former would have swiftly dispatched a secret treaty-making expedition and the latter would have crowned its work by imposing a *Schutzbrief* on the Sultan. But nothing like that happened. The Foreign Office very properly instructed Malet to tell Bismarck the whole story—the origin of the scheme and the names of its promoters, the projected railway, and the intention to obtain a 'comprehensive' concession from the Sultan. The British Government, he was to say, would not support it 'unless they were fully satisfied that every precaution were taken to ensure that it would in no way conflict with the interests of the territory that has been taken under German protectorate, nor affect the part of the Sultan's dominions lying between that territory and the sea'. They wished to avoid 'any clashing of interests' or 'possibility of misunderstanding. . .'.<sup>2</sup> This communication reached Bismarck two or three days before he released the news of the imminent naval demonstration; and, whatever he may have thought of diplomatic methods so different from his own, he decided in this matter as in that of the proposed Delimitation Commission to be conciliatory. Granville was thanked for his 'accommo-

<sup>1</sup> Aberdare and others to G., with enclosures, 22. iv. 85; K.P. XII. pt. i. 32.

<sup>2</sup> G. to M., 25. v. 85; *ibid.*, 48.

dating tone' and 'regard for German interests', but would the British Government defer their decision on the project till an authoritative map of the German protectorate was available to show whether or not the project would 'interfere with our establishments'?<sup>1</sup> The map, as has been seen, was ready on June 20, and on June 27 Malet wrote to Salisbury, who had succeeded to both Gladstone's and Granville's offices on the 23rd, to say that the British project had found favour in Berlin. The exact location of the districts annexed by the latest German explorers was not yet known, but 'an understanding rounding off the different territories could always be come to in a friendly manner as had recently been done on the West Coast.'<sup>2</sup>

The obstacle to the execution of the Holmwood scheme lay elsewhere than in Berlin. In the first place the Foreign Office had asked—very properly again—for Kirk's 'private opinion' as to how the Sultan would react to it. He was 'no longer physically the same man as in 1878', Kirk answered, and he was 'disturbed by his political troubles'—a phrase which cloaked the feelings of Barghash when he found his British friends were apparently not to be relied on to defend him against Germany. He would not, therefore, grant of his own accord so large-scale a concession as that of 1878.<sup>3</sup> But there was another obstacle. When Anderson interviewed Mackinnon, Hutton and Aberdare, he was quickly convinced that the scheme would 'come to nothing'. He found that its promoters would risk no money on it unless the concession they obtained were 'guaranteed by the British Government'. And that condition, he coldly noted, was 'incapable of realisation'.<sup>4</sup> For a Government guarantee was much more than the Government 'sanction' which Mackinnon had asked for and obtained in 1877. It was something like a charter, and a charter was the English for a *Schutzbrief*. And for that no British ministers were yet prepared. It was just at this time, indeed, that Kirk asked that anxious question—'Would a protectorate be considered under any circumstances?'—and got no answer.<sup>5</sup> So the 'absolutely essential' step was not taken. Weeks passed, and when Hutton called again on Anderson on

<sup>1</sup> Hatzfeldt to Münster, 3. vi. 85: K.P. XII. pt. i. 66.

<sup>2</sup> Malet to S., 27. vi. 85: K.P. XII. pt. ii. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Memo. by Anderson, 2. vii. 85: K.P. XII. pt. ii. 6\*.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> See p. 417 above.



July 1, he reported that Mackinnon was 'half-hearted about the scheme' and was saying that the Foreign Office 'did not seem to think it practicable'. That was promptly corrected by Anderson. The commercial prospects, he said, were apparently comparable with those of the Congo area, and the climate suitable for European homes. 'It would seem to be a pity if, while German adventurers were working energetically to get the markets of the interior, this the best of all openings were lost to us through want of enterprise on the part of our traders.' Would not Mackinnon at least make a modest beginning with a trading settlement under Kilimanjaro? . . .<sup>1</sup> Nothing happened. When the German quarrel with Barghash came to a head in August, it was not complicated by any British claims on his dominions. Anderson himself, indeed, had come to the conclusion that, since Holmwood's idea of a parallel British route had come to nothing, it would best serve the Sultan's interests if the Germans controlled all the three main routes to Tabora and Kilimanjaro. In any case Kirk should be instructed to persuade Barghash to give the Germans all they asked. Otherwise, he should plainly tell him, 'he will invite a conflict which will be fatal to his independence.'<sup>2</sup>

## 8

Commodore Paschen, commanding the squadron, had been commissioned to present the German demands, and on August 11 he submitted them to Barghash in a formal document. It was the Emperor's desire, it said, to establish friendly relations with the Sultan and to that end it was proposed to negotiate certain treaties without delay. 'But, as an immediate condition without which His Majesty the Emperor will not begin to negotiate, His Majesty demands the clear and unequivocal declaration of Your Highness that you withdraw your protest against the treaties made with the free and legal Sultans of the lands of Usagara, Nguru, Useguha and Ukami as also with the Sultan of the district

<sup>1</sup> Anderson's memo., 2. vii. 85: K.P. XII. pt. ii. 6\*. Mackinnon's misreading of F.O. opinion on this occasion confirms the view that the failure of the 1877-8 negotiations was not the F.O.'s fault: see pp. 317-18 above. For Kitchener's opinion of Mackinnon, see p. 469, note 1, below.

<sup>2</sup> Anderson's memo. on the Zanzibar Question, 9. vi. 85: K.P. XII. pt. i. 77-8.

of Witu, and recall your troops and agents in the above-named places.<sup>1</sup> Next morning Paschen called at the British consulate to return the visit of courtesy which Kirk had paid him on his flagship on the previous day. Twenty-four hours, he said, was enough time to allow for the Sultan's reply; and, if it did not come before evening, he would not attend the banquet at the palace which had been arranged for himself and the officers of the squadron. Later in the day the German ships were drawn up in line opposite the centre of the town and their guns run out for action.<sup>2</sup> It was a difficult moment for Kirk. He had just received a telegram from Salisbury: 'In view of the recent understanding with Germany as to a joint inquiry into the limits of Zanzibar, suggest to Sultan that for that reason he should submit to German demands under protest.' Kirk knew that Paschen, who was now insisting on the withdrawal of one protest, would not accept another; but, apart from that, it was impossible to secure Barghash's instant submission without risking what remained of his old attachment to Britain. 'My position throughout', he explained afterwards to Salisbury, 'has been delicate and difficult, and at one time I hardly expected to induce the Sultan to yield without thereby losing further influence over him. There was and is still a real danger that at any time he might think it his interest to make terms with Germany alone in a manner perhaps prejudicial to the interests and influence of other nations, especially of Great Britain, in these parts.'<sup>3</sup> More time, then, was needed, and Kirk obtained it by asking Barghash to raise in writing a question as to whether Paschen had not received later instructions which might have modified the tenor of his 'demands'. There was some slight excuse for this request in the previous correspondence, and Paschen did not quarrel with it. He attended the banquet. On the following day (August 13) Kirk won Barghash over. It was not an easy task since the German claims affected territory in which Barghash's overlordship had seemed unquestionable. Usagara, it may be pointed out again, was the one inland district near the sea which had been 'occupied' by a military post. As to Witu, Simba's treaty with Brenner, concluded without Majid's

<sup>1</sup> Translation from German text of 11. viii. 85 in K. to S., 21. viii. 85: *ibid.*, 90.

<sup>2</sup> K. to S., 21. viii. 85; K.P. XII. pt. ii. 89.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

cognisance, was manifestly invalid; and, while his recent professions of loyalty had proved to be a sham, Barghash could have sent 'Mathews' army' at any time in the last few years to ensure the renegade's obedience or to drive him out. To Barghash, indeed, Bismarck's conduct must have seemed a far worse outrage on his rights than Ismail's; but he yielded in the end. 'His Highness objected strongly at first to complete submission, saying that he would agree to withdraw his troops and cease to interfere in those countries, but maintained his protest.'<sup>1</sup> That, of course, was to reject the first of the two demands, and Kirk finally persuaded Barghash to be content to make an indirect or tacit protest by wording his reply 'so as to show that he yielded under pressure'. The 'act of submission' ran, accordingly, as follows: 'In consequence of the demand which comes to us from His Majesty the Emperor of Germany as an ultimatum and as indispensable to the commencement of friendly negotiations, we acknowledge the protectorate of Germany over the land of Usagara, Nguru, Useguha and Ukami and over the district of Witu, the boundaries whereof shall be hereafter defined, we acknowledge over the said places the protectorate of His Majesty, and undertake to remove our soldiers and make this known to our officers who occupy the whole of the places of the coast.'<sup>2</sup>

At the beginning and the end of this document, drafted, one may suppose, with Kirk's assistance, Barghash had saved what could be saved of his dignity and his rightful claims. He had made it clear that he had surrendered Usagara under duress and that *all* the coast was under his control. But he knew as well as Kirk that the German occupation of those places would be useless without outlets to the sea; and when it came to those 'friendly negotiations', to the treaties he was expected to sign, to the Anglo-German inquiry into the limits of his dominions, was it not reasonable to expect that the issue would again be decided, not by the claims of long local usage or international law, nor by the pledges given him by other nations, but by those warships in the harbour? Twice before in his life he had seen a similar exhibition of European naval power. In 1859 the war-

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> English translation enclosed in K. to S., 21. viii. 85: *ibid.* The Arabic words translated as 'ultimatum' were *taklif akhir*, literally 'final imposition'.

ships had been French and British, and it was British policy that had prevailed. But that policy, Barghash may have reflected, had not been aggressive or acquisitive. Its only purpose had been to protect the Sultan against a rebel, the Sultan his brother Majid, the rebel his youthful self. In 1873 the warships had been British only, and in the end he had been told they would blockade him: Kirk, indeed, like Paschen, had delivered an ultimatum. But again the British objective had not been to weaken his authority or steal slices of his realm. It was only to stop the Slave Trade, and he had been given to understand that by sacrificing his own and his own people's wishes in that matter and obeying 'the will of the people of England', he had won their lasting gratitude and friendship. He must have bitterly recalled his visit to England only ten years back—the cheering crowds, the courtesies and compliments at Windsor and Whitehall, the honour paid him at the Guildhall and the Mansion House. . . . And the sincerity of it all had seemed so clearly proved in that winter after his return when McKillop and his Egyptians had been so quickly and firmly expelled from Kismayu and all the Somali coast. Had he not acknowledged then 'the force of the disinterested friendship of Her Majesty's Government for his country?' . . . And had he not repaid it since? The Egyptians had hardly gone before he had offered British 'capitalists' an exclusive opportunity of controlling the development of all his dominions on the mainland. In 1881, only four years ago, he had asked the British Government to undertake the regency when he died and control the succession to his throne, thus assuming, as he doubtless realised, a virtual protectorate over all his realm. And only eight months ago, at their urgent request, he had promised not to allow anyone else to intrench on his sovereignty without consulting them. What more could he have done in all those last twelve years to prove his loyalty to Britain and ensure her loyalty to him? . . . It had never been explicitly set down in writing, it was true, but did so clear an obligation of good faith require the sanction of a treaty? The Declaration of 1862, moreover, though it committed only France and Britain to respect the independence of his dominions, surely implied that they would oppose its violation by any other Power. . . . No doubt he understood—Kirk must at least have hinted at it—that Britain was in difficulties in

Europe. But were they so very formidable? Was British sea-power in danger? And, in any case, was Britain justified in easing her position at his expense alone? If he had heard Mr. Gladstone inviting Germany to share with Britain in the task, the duty indeed, of colonial expansion, he might or might not have thought it wise; but he would certainly have asked that the invitation should not be interpreted to cover a German seizure of territories which Britain had formally acknowledged for forty years past to belong to the Sultan of Zanzibar . . . *Mashallah*. Palmerston had once told his father that the British destruction of the Slave Trade was 'written in the Book of Fate'. The names and deeds of Bismarck, it seemed, and of Denhardt and Peters and Jühlke were written there too.

A piece of crested, black-edged Foreign Office notepaper, on which some comments on Kirk's report of the ultimatum had been jotted down, came somehow into his possession and is preserved among his papers. On the first page Sir Villiers Lister, Assistant Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, had written this minute:

'Lord Salisbury. Here is a very interesting letter from Kirk. The Sultan ought not to be robbed nor the Germans benefited by sham treaties or forgeries. T.V.L., Sept. 17/85.'

On the following page Salisbury added his opinion in red ink:

'A most interesting letter. The German proceedings are not creditable. But, if we had no motive for standing well with G.G., I do not quite see our interest in this Zanzibar quarrel. Keeping every other nation out on the bare chance that some day or other our traders will pluck up heart to go in is a poor policy. S.'

Across the top of this page run a couple of sentences in Kirk's clear, firm hand-writing:

'Lord Salisbury in this minute fails to appreciate our interest in Zanzibar where we have 6,000 Brit. Indian traders holding 9/10 of the trade, while the Germans have only two

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trading-houses. We have gone in for solid trade: Germany founds claims where she has not a trader. John Kirk.<sup>1</sup>

In that incisive comment Kirk was answering 'realism' with 'realism'. Neither Salisbury's note nor his is concerned with sentiments of honour or humanity. The claim to annex East Africa is grounded only on the extent to which traders from Europe or Asia have 'gone in'. Yet, even on that material plane, Kirk had the best of the argument. Nobody nowadays will question his right to assume that the interests of British Indians should be regarded by the servants of the Emperor of India as not less important than those of foreigners. Had those traders been Englishmen, Salisbury's attitude, as he himself makes clear, would have been quite different; and the fact that a British Prime Minister, who had actually been Secretary of State for India, should set so wide a gulf between subjects of the Crown in Britain and in India is the sort of thing that makes it easy to understand why the coming rise of Indian nationalism was to be darkened from time to time by racial antipathy and distrust.<sup>2</sup>

But Kirk realised, no doubt, that argument now was waste

<sup>1</sup> This document is inserted in K.P. XII. pt. ii. 118 alongside a dispatch from Kirk dated August 31, 1885, and received at the F.O. on September 28. Since Lister dated his note September 17, the insertion is clearly at the wrong place, and the minutes evidently refer to Kirk's dispatch of August 21 (see p. 430 above) which was received on September 14. 'G.G.' in Salisbury's minute means, of course, 'German Government'.

<sup>2</sup> Except as regards the terms of the British Commercial Treaty in the winter of 1885-6 (see p. 443, below) and German claims at Obbia in the following spring (see p. 454, below) no correspondence on East Africa between the India Office and the Foreign Office or between the I.O. and the Government of India is to be found in the F.O. records from December 1884 to September 1885 or in the I.O. records for the whole of 1885 and 1886. Thus the I.O. left the British Indian question entirely to the F.O. When, for example, in July 1885 Archdeacon Farler wrote to Lord Randolph Churchill, then Secretary of State for India, asking him to press for a British protectorate in Usambara in the interests of British Indian traders, his letter was endorsed, 'All this is for F.O.' (F.O. 84. 1740). Reporting an interview with Salisbury on the Zanzibar question at the end of 1885, the French ambassador said: 'Il a ajouté que le Gouvernement indien n'attachait plus la même importance qu'autrefois aux affaires de Zanzibar, et tendait à s'en désintéresser de plus en plus sans vouloir cependant abandonner un ancien allié' (Waddington to de Freycinet, 23. xii. 85: *D.D.F.* series i. vol. vi. 163-4). In a letter to H. H. Johnston in 1887, Kirk made an unusually severe comment. 'Lord Salisbury sees no loss in giving up our interests in East Africa because they are Indian and therefore cannot make themselves felt in Parliament' (*Life of Sir Harry Johnston*, 69).

of ink. The need for 'standing well' with Bismarck and nothing else had settled the matter; and on that account and none other all his work in the last ten years—so at least it seemed at the moment—had been wasted. He was too big a man to stress his personal position overmuch; but in fact it was only less distressing than Barghash's. The great *balozi's* day was over. His policy of an Anglo-Arab East Africa had failed because his repeated warnings as to the dangers of delay in carrying it out had been ignored. And besides the disappointment there was the feeling that he was no longer trusted as he had once been trusted by either of the two parties he had done his best to serve, either by the Secretary of State or by the Sultan. Those anxious telegrams from the Foreign Office and in particular the agitation over his letter to Simba had made it clear that his chiefs in London were uncertain whether or not he was acting in full accordance with their new policy. Did they, one wonders, realise how complete their *volte-face* had been? Malet, at any rate, had understood. On the morrow of the announcement of the naval demonstration and Rosebery's visit to Berlin he had told Granville that he doubted whether the plan of co-operating with the German Government could be carried out 'through the agent who has previously upheld the opposite system'.<sup>1</sup> It was certainly difficult, and it was made more difficult by the fact that both Granville and Salisbury, though they had no intention of sacrificing Kirk to the new policy, omitted to tell him clearly what it was. In a private letter to Hill, written shortly before the ultimatum, Kirk unburdened himself on that point. If an agreement had been reached with Germany, 'Why', he asks, 'was I not told? . . . No instructions have reached me till quite lately with regard to Germany and the German policy. I have been left to follow my old and approved line of action. . . .' 'My dear Hill,' he breaks out, 'nothing would please me better than to be away at present.' But whatever the difficulties and misunderstandings, he must stay at his post at least a little longer. 'I feel that with me all English influence falls, and I am loath to kick the last prop away so long as we have a chance of redeeming even to a small extent lost ground or saving even a part that may be useful some day.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> M. to G., 4. vi. 85: G.D. 29. 179.

<sup>2</sup> K. to H., 7. vii. 1885: K.P. *misc.*

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Kirk's deepest feelings were not put on paper; but it must have been the betrayal of Barghash that hurt him most. He complains to Hill that the Sultan is now seeking other and 'perhaps less discreet' advice and that he no longer shows him the letters he receives from foreign sources, at any rate until they have been answered. When the German ships arrive and he has to advise submission, 'I fear he will simply drop me, and I will have the blame for what I have no power to prevent. . . .' Kirk knew, of course, that he could expect nothing else. There might be no sharp estrangement, but the close and loyal alliance of the last twelve years was ended. For it was Kirk who had conveyed to Barghash those pledges of British friendship, adding, presumably, on occasion such personal assurances as he never doubted he was justified in giving—and now they had been broken.



## XVIII

### THE COMMERCIAL TREATIES

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#### I

On August 19 Rear-Admiral Knorr arrived in the *Bismarck* to take over the conduct of the 'friendly negotiations'; and next morning Kirk made what seemed a sinister discovery. For some days past another German ship, the *Adler*, had been hovering off the town, coming into the harbour by day, putting out again at night, and making signals. Puzzled by this strange behaviour, Kirk sent a boy out to the ship to sell oranges. He returned with the information that the Sultan's exiled sister and her children were aboard. So Barghash, it appeared, having suffered one humiliation as Sultan, was to suffer another, and perhaps a worse one, as the head of a Moslem family. Emily Ruete's previous approaches to her brother had been inspired by the simple desire to obtain the larger share of the family inheritance which she believed was rightly hers, and there is no evidence to show that she had consciously allowed herself to be made the tool of German policy. Her sympathies however, were naturally with Germany. A few years earlier she had written an appealing letter to Barghash who had sent it with a few curt words of explanation to Kirk. The gist of it was that Barghash should seek German friendship rather than British and that the way to win it was to become reconciled to her. 'The Ruler of Germany and his family are all kind to me and I have been many times to see them. . . . Should you wish me to act for you with the German Emperor, I can go personally to him and speak with him for you. . . . My brother, I want you to understand that the British only wish to destroy your power and your name; they only await a fitting time to seize Zanzibar and everything in it, just as lately they seized Egypt and its dependencies by stratagem. . . . Do

not disclose what I have told you regarding the designs of the English. You must understand that the Rulers are our friends; it is only the Government that wishes to seize your realm as they would eat up the whole world.'<sup>1</sup>

There was more danger in those naive opinions than might seem on the surface. Emily Ruete's loyalty to Germany might come in useful. For, owing to the lack of a settled rule of succession—a lack which Kirk had tried to remedy<sup>2</sup>—her son might be brought forward at any propitious moment as a claimant to the throne. And the boy had had a German father and was a German subject. That was one reason why Bismarck thought fit to send Emily Ruete to Zanzibar at this particular juncture. If Barghash should prove recalcitrant, there might be serious trouble, a bombardment, a popular tumult, a revolution, and then . . . ? Alternatively, the Sultan, whose resentment at his sister's importunity was well known, might lose his temper and lay hands on her, German though she now was by marriage and domicile, and then . . . ? In his memoirs of Bismarck Busch makes a cynical joke about this sordid business. 'The trap', he says, 'had been very cleverly prepared for Sultan Barghash.' Madame Ruete 'was to go out to Zanzibar and press her claim, and an accident might possibly occur to the lady—her brother might have her strangled'.<sup>3</sup>

Kirk promptly telegraphed his discovery to the Foreign Office, and on inquiry at Berlin its truth was admitted. There was no intention, Malet was told, of using Madame Ruete 'as a menace to the Sultan', but 'it is only just that she should have the protection of the navy in making her claims, seeing that she is a German subject'.<sup>4</sup> Kirk proposed to get over the awkward

<sup>1</sup> Mme. R. to B., undated : K.P. *misc.* An English translation made by Kirk from the original. From internal evidence it seems probable that the date was 1883.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 377 ff., above.

<sup>3</sup> M. Busch, *Bismarck, some secret pages of his history* (London, 1898), iii. 144-5. Bismarck had contemplated sending Emily Ruete to Zanzibar in a German corvette in the autumn of 1884. The negotiations were to be conducted by the commander of the corvette who was to have orders to threaten force if the Sultan rejected his sister's advances and to take measures of reprisal if she were killed or mishandled : Jantzen, 25-8 citing unpublished German Foreign Office documents.

<sup>4</sup> K. to S., 20 and 21. viii. 85; M. to S., 21 and 22. viii. 85; K. to S., 2. ix. 85; K.P. XII. pt. ii. 60-4, 81.

incident as quickly as possible by persuading Barghash to make a final financial settlement forthwith; but he found him, not unnaturally, even more resentful than before of outside interference in this domestic matter. 'Sultan declines to discuss sister's application,' he cabled on September 2; 'no opportunity of any intervention given: she now lands openly.' But in fact her presence in Zanzibar was no longer dangerous. Barghash had submitted to the German ultimatum. There was no need for a revolution. To the German officers, indeed, reported Kirk, this 'side-show' had become embarrassing: it might make the Sultan more difficult to handle in the coming negotiations. So Knorr presented his *protégée's* claims to Barghash in a highly tactful letter. 'My Government', he said, 'have no intention of meddling in your family affairs.' He was simply stating Madame Ruete's desire for a reconciliation.<sup>1</sup> Barghash made no response, nor, of course, did he communicate with his sister who remained in her lodgings in the town. Several weeks went by, and at last Knorr decided to get rid of the encumbrance. After consultation with Kirk and communication with Berlin, he promised the unhappy lady to make sure that her claims were fairly examined, and shipped her home.<sup>2</sup>

When Knorr raised the question again Barghash was less uncompromising. He still refused to pay his sister anything. She had 'disgraced the family and done acts punishable by death, and, having since abandoned the Mahommedan religion, she was dead at law'. But he was willing to hand over a sum of money to the German Emperor to use as he might think fit. There was a hitch, of course, when it came to fixing the amount. Emily Ruete claimed £20,000, Knorr made £6,000 his minimum, Barghash offered £600; and it was not till the end of 1886 that a final settlement put an end to the sequence of unseemly incidents started by an act of personal misconduct twenty years before.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> K. to S., 22. viii. 85, enclosed in K. to S., 24. viii. 85: K.P. XII. pt. ii. 95.

<sup>2</sup> K. to S., 5. x. 85: *ibid.*, 123.

<sup>3</sup> K. to S., 29. ix. 85: K.P. XII. pt. ii. 2; K. to S., 15. i. 86: K.P. XII. pt. iv. 70; Holmwood to F.O., 23. xi. 86: K.P. XII. pt. vii. 98. For the indirect method, compare Majid's payment of the Muscat subsidy to the Government of Bombay, p. 73 above.

Meantime the negotiations were running their course. They were as 'friendly' as they could be in the circumstances. Barghash had accepted his fate. Knorr was more considerate than Rohlfs. And Kirk, whatever his feelings may have been, could do exactly what the Foreign Office wanted now that he knew exactly what it was. At the time of the ultimatum there had been some anxiety about him in Berlin. 'Very important', the British *chargé d'affaires* had telegraphed, 'that I should be able to assure German Government that Kirk will endeavour to induce Sultan to yield to their wishes.'<sup>1</sup> But the assurance was not needed. 'I should wish your Lordship to understand', Kirk cabled on August 15, 'Sultan gave way only under pressure from me.'<sup>2</sup> Paschen freely consulted Kirk, and so did Knorr. The latter, indeed, asked Kirk outright to help him with his local knowledge and experience in conducting the negotiations, and Kirk obtained authority from the Foreign Office to do so.<sup>3</sup> In September Herbert Bismarck told Malet that Consul-General Travers had 'written in the most grateful terms of the assistance which Sir John Kirk had given him and said that the relations between them were most cordial'.<sup>4</sup>

Salisbury, too, was in a cheerful mood. The situation in Europe and the Mediterranean was easier. On August 24 he wrote to Lord Iddesleigh, 'I have been using the credit I have got with Bismarck in the Caroline Islands and Zanzibar to get help in Russia and Turkey and Egypt. He is rather a Jew, but on the whole I have as yet got my money's worth.'<sup>5</sup> Nor was he anxious as to the possible expansion of German claims in East Africa. Just at this time a German memorandum on the forthcoming Delimitation Commission and the instructions to be given to the German representative were communicated to him. Both documents, he thought, 'betrayed an itching to confiscate the coast as well as the interior', but he discounted it. 'An un-

<sup>1</sup> Scott to Salisbury, 12. viii. 85: K.P. XII. pt. ii. 52.

<sup>2</sup> K. to S., 15. viii. 85: *ibid.*, 56.

<sup>3</sup> K. to S., 21. viii. 85; S. to K., 23. viii. 85: *ibid.*, 62-3.

<sup>4</sup> M. to S., 18. ix. 85: *ibid.*, 100.

<sup>5</sup> S. to I., 24. viii. 85: Lady G. Cecil, *Life of Robert, Marquess of Salisbury* (London, 1921 onwards), iii. 230. Salisbury had helped Bismarck to secure the Caroline Islands by 'mediating' with Spain.

wise display of swagger,' he called it.<sup>1</sup> And soon it seemed that he was right. At the end of August Knorr and Travers disclosed to Kirk the outlines of the treaty-settlement they had in mind. He was agreeably surprised. 'Nothing could be more liberal to the Sultan', he reported, 'than the scheme proposed.' In principle it was agreed that the Sultan's existing revenues on the coast were not to be reduced and that he was to retain 'a direct pecuniary interest in the prospects of the interior'. In particular it was suggested (1) that all goods entering the Zanzibar dominions from foreign countries should pay, as at present, a five per cent. duty; (2) that the varying duties on the Sultan's monopolies (i.e. the products, mainly ivory and gum-copal, which he had reserved his right to tax) should be replaced by a fixed tariff; and (3) that goods coming from the interior into the Zanzibar dominions or passing from port to port therein, i.e. the transit-trade, should be duty-free.<sup>2</sup>

There remained the old crucial question of a port for the Usagara Protectorate. There must be a port, it was now admitted—and Kirk reminded Salisbury that he had said as much when first he heard of the *Schutzbrief*, and had indicated Dar-es-Salaam as the likeliest choice—but it might be recognised 'as an integral part of the Sultan's dominions' and the customs-duties would be paid to him. 'It is, however, clear', Kirk observed, 'that . . . the Sultan's authority would be virtually superseded, and the place become to all intents a German settlement.' The same thing, he added, is to be expected at Witu. British commercial interests would not suffer if the provisions of the Berlin Act for equality in trade were applied to the German protectorates. 'But the possession by Germany of a strong naval station in East Africa will also have to be considered from a strategic point of view, and we shall have to decide whether we are not called on to prepare for the future consequences.'<sup>3</sup> Herbert Bismarck, it is true, told Malet at this time that Germany did not want a naval base;<sup>4</sup> but that the Germans intended their port to be something like it became evident when Knorr insisted that naval stores and coal should be landed free and provision made for

<sup>1</sup> S. to Malet. 24. viii. 85: *ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> K. to S., 31. viii. 85, enclosing minutes of meeting with K. and T.: K.P. XII. pt. ii. 101.

<sup>3</sup> K. to S., 31. viii. 85: *ibid.*, 118.

<sup>4</sup> M. to S., 3. ix. 85: *ibid.*, 81.

## THE COMMERCIAL TREATIES

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re-fitting ships of war.<sup>1</sup> The port had still to be chosen, and Paschen cruised along the strip of coast parallel with the Usagara protectorate and chose it. It was, of course, Dar-es-Salaam.<sup>2</sup>

What of Barghash? No doubt he realised that all these matters were being settled over his head, and that he would be expected in due course to sign what he was told to sign. But, since Kirk agreed with Knorr, what could he do? He could argue and procrastinate according to the custom of the East, but no more. He acquiesced in the general scheme of the financial proposals. He acquiesced provisionally in the port and in the choice of it, only asking that, since it was still to be 'his' port, it should not be fortified by Germany, nor garrisoned by German troops.<sup>3</sup> When however, the draft Treaty was actually submitted to him, he tried to make a fight. He objected to the fiscal settlement because, while it purported to maintain his present revenue, it robbed him of the power to levy new taxes and increase old ones; and, when on November 14 he accepted the draft 'in principle', it was only, Kirk again reported, 'under the strongest pressure from me'.<sup>4</sup> But the German Government were now getting impatient. Only Knorr had power to sign the Treaty, and he could not be expected to remain indefinitely at Zanzibar, so Herbert Bismarck requested that Kirk should be told 'to induce the Sultan to sign at once'.<sup>5</sup> Kirk did his best. On December 20 the Treaty was signed by Barghash and Knorr.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> K. to S., 9. ix. 85: *ibid.*, 84.

<sup>2</sup> K. to S., 28. ix. 85: *ibid.*, 148. Waddington understood from Salisbury that the Treaty contained a clause which gave Germany 'le droit d'établir une station navale dans un port de la terre ferme' (W. to de F., 23. xii. 85: *D.D.F.* ser. i. vol. vi. 163-4); but there is no such clause in the published text. Apparently there was an informal undertaking which was not formally implemented till after the Anglo-German Agreement of 1886 (see pp. 473-7 below).

<sup>3</sup> K. to S., 9. ix. 85: K.P. XII. pt. ii. 84.

<sup>4</sup> M. to S., 17. xi. 85; K. to S., 18 and 20. xi. 85: K.P. XII. pt. iii. 25, 29, 49. Kirk attributed Barghash's desire for more revenue to 'the expensive tastes he has recently developed', such as buildings, steamships, and additions to his harem.

<sup>5</sup> S. to K., 18. xi. 85: *ibid.* 27.

<sup>6</sup> K. to S., 21. xii. 85: K.P. XII. pt. iv. 45. Knorr left on January 9: K. to S., 8. i. 86: *ibid.*, 10.

The German Treaty had so radically modified the old fiscal system in the Sultan's dominions that it was naturally followed by a series of applications for new treaties by the other Powers interested in East African trade. Naturally, too, Britain, who directly or indirectly had by far the largest share in that trade, took the lead. On September 3, soon after his negotiations with Knorr had begun, the Sultan was informed that Kirk had been empowered to negotiate a new commercial treaty on the British Government's behalf.<sup>1</sup> Kirk waited till the German draft had been presented, and then, on November 6, he explained to Barghash that the proposed British Treaty was 'almost identical' with it. Thus it confirmed the system of fixed customs-duties which, as has been seen, was the feature of the German draft Barghash most disliked; and Kirk felt it necessary to warn him—as he had warned him for a different purpose years ago—that it would pay him much better to accept the new Treaty than to have the old one strictly enforced.<sup>2</sup> Barghash, of course, gave in. He accepted the British draft in principle on the same day as he accepted the German; but in this case the final stage was delayed. The Government of India, awakened for a moment to the fact that 'Indians were mostly affected', desired to see the draft. So did the Colonial Office.<sup>3</sup> One or two minor changes were made, and on April 30, 1886, the Treaty was signed by Barghash and Kirk.<sup>4</sup>

Britain was not the first Power to have made a commercial agreement with the ruler of Zanzibar. The United States had concluded a treaty with Seyyid Said, then residing at Muscat, in 1833, six years before Britain followed their example.<sup>5</sup> Since it guaranteed 'most-favoured nation' treatment of American trade there was nothing in the new arrangements to threaten American interests, and only a short 'supplementary treaty' was needed. It was signed on July 3, 1886.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> S. to Sultan, 3. ix. 85: K.P. XII. pt. ii. 155.

<sup>2</sup> K. to S., 18. xi. 85: K.P. XII. pt. iii. 49. See p. 96, above.

<sup>3</sup> F.O. to K., 31. xii. 85 and 27. i. 86: K.P. XII. pt. iii. 58; pt. iv. 56\*.

<sup>4</sup> K. to Rosebery, 30. iv. 86: K.P. XII. pt. v. 41. Text of treaty in *S.P.* lxxvii (1885-6), 54.

<sup>5</sup> See *East Africa and its Invaders*, 368-9.

<sup>6</sup> Holmwood to Rosebery, 25. vii. 86: K.P. XII. pt. vi. 78. Text of treaty in *S.P.* lxxviii (1886-7), 777-8.

Next in order of time came France whose treaty had been made in 1844; but the French Government refused to adjust themselves to the new situation.<sup>1</sup> They explained that their existing treaty enabled them to import spirits at the old uniform duty of five per cent., while the new tariff agreed on by Germany, Britain and the United States imposed a duty of twenty-five per cent. French importers, therefore, stood to gain; and, though the British and German Governments pointed out that, since all the treaties precluded differential duties, they would be entitled to require the Sultan to reduce the duty on their spirits also to five per cent. to the manifest disadvantage of his revenue, the French Government maintained their ground.<sup>2</sup>

Of the nations whose commercial ties with Zanzibar were more recent, Belgium (as has been recorded in a previous chapter)<sup>3</sup> had sent a consul to Zanzibar in 1880 with authority to negotiate a treaty, but he had died before the task was completed. His place had not been filled, and all Leopold's interest in Africa had presently become absorbed by the Congo. In 1885, therefore, the Belgian Government were content with a provisional convention, providing for 'most-favoured nation' treatment and for the establishment of consulates.<sup>4</sup>

Italian interest in East Africa at this time was even younger than Belgian. Frere, it will be recalled, had encouraged the Italian Government to develop an East African trade on his journey across Europe in 1873.<sup>5</sup> But nothing came of it till in April 1885, in the midst of the alarms and excursions created by the *Schutzbrief*, Captain Cecchi and Commander Fecarotta arrived at Zanzibar on the frigate *Barbarigo*, and 'made certain propositions to His Highness which show a wish on the part of the Italian Government to have relations with Zanzibar and, if possible, found a trading settlement'. 'The arrival of the Italian ship', Kirk commented, 'is clearly looked on with distrust by the German consulate.'<sup>6</sup> The affair developed. On May 7 Kirk wrote that the Italians were apparently not authorised to do more than make inquiries, but 'it is easy to see that Port Durn-

<sup>1</sup> H. to R., as in preceding note.

<sup>2</sup> *Aides-mémoire*, by Münster and Lyons, 10. v. 87: K.P. XIII. pt. ix. 68-9.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 347, above.

<sup>4</sup> Text in S.P. lxxvi (1884-5), 290.

<sup>5</sup> See p. 184, above.

<sup>6</sup> K. to Granville, 28. iv. 85: K.P. XII. pt. i. 49.



ford, Kismayu, or some such harbour on the Somali coast, especially if sufficiently near to give a hold on the River Juba, is what the Italians wish to get'. The French consul was 'strongly opposed' to such designs. As for Barghash, he saw that the Italians were only anxious 'to share in the scramble now going on for possessions in Africa and join in the division of territory that will probably follow German operations'. Kirk himself adopted a 'perfectly friendly but neutral' attitude to Cecchi, recommending him to obtain in the first place a commercial treaty.<sup>1</sup> The Italians acted quickly on this advice. On May 28 a treaty was signed by the Sultan and by Cecchi and Fecarotta. Its terms were similar to those of the old British and French Treaties.<sup>2</sup>

Cecchi stayed on at Zanzibar as Italian *chargé d'affaires*, and four months later—the German squadron was now at Zanzibar—Kirk cabled that he had asked the Sultan for the mouth of the Juba.<sup>3</sup> The Italian Foreign Office was questioned and declared that the message was 'without the least foundation'.<sup>4</sup> But the Sultan assured Kirk that there was no mistake as to what had passed in his personal interview with Cecchi.<sup>5</sup> 'I can only suppose', wrote Villiers Lister, in communicating Kirk's report to the Italian Ambassador, 'that he was rather over zealous or had caught the infection of asking for African territory.'<sup>6</sup>

Portugal had caught it too. She had an older connexion with East Africa, after all, than any other Christian nation. Her sailors had been the first Europeans to sail up the coast, and, hard on their tracks, her soldiers had come and conquered it. From the beginning of the sixteenth century the whole of the coast had been subjected to Portuguese rule until in the course of the eighteenth century Barghash's Omani ancestors had expelled them from the northern half of it and established the claim to the African dominions which Barghash had inherited.<sup>7</sup> But the Portuguese had remained in territorial contact with their rivals. They had kept their hold on Mozambique, and the

<sup>1</sup> K. to Granville, 7. v. 85; *ibid.*, 69.

<sup>2</sup> K. to G., 15. vi. 85; K.P. XII. pt. ii. 31. Text of treaty in *S.P.* lxxvi (1884-5), 269.

<sup>3</sup> K. to S., 15. ix. 85; K.P. XII. pt. ii. 31, 97.

<sup>4</sup> Depretis to Catalani, 16. ix. 85; *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> K. to S., 20. ix. 85; *ibid.*, 99.

<sup>6</sup> L. to Catalani, 21. ix. 85; *ibid.*, 100. Cecchi said there had been a misunderstanding owing to faulty interpretation: K. to S., 26. ix. 85; *ibid.*, 101.

<sup>7</sup> See *East Africa and its Invaders*, chap. iii.

northern frontier of Mozambique was the southern frontier of the Sultan's realm. It had never been precisely demarcated. The British Treaty of 1822 had recognised Seyyid Said's dominions as extending to Cape Delgado; but Frere had stated in 1873 that the southern limit was Tungi Bay of which Cape Delgado forms the northern wall. There was scope, therefore, for a dispute about a mile or two of coastland; and in 1861 the Portuguese Government refused to ratify a commercial treaty of the usual kind which had actually been signed at Zanzibar because it did not include a provision fixing the frontier at the River Rovuma about twenty miles north of Cape Delgado.<sup>1</sup>

In 1879 this broken thread was picked up again. The Governor-General of Mozambique came to Zanzibar and pressed again for the Rovuma frontier as part of a commercial treaty. But Barghash was as firm as Majid. The River Mninjani, which flows into Tungi Bay a few miles south-west of Cape Delgado, had been 'known and acknowledged of old', he declared, as the limit of the Zanzibar dominions. He suggested a reference to the British consulate, but the Governor-General refused to have dealings with anyone but the Sultan. In the course of his visit, indeed, he treated Kirk with a studied discourtesy which was the more remarkable since for years past Kirk had looked after the interests of the Portuguese subjects, mostly Goans, at Zanzibar and in 1873 he had been publicly thanked by them on that account.<sup>2</sup> Kirk's mediation might conceivably have brought about a compromise as to the frontier; but, as it was, da Cunha could get no more than an exclusively commercial treaty. This time it was ratified at Lisbon, but not till 1883.<sup>3</sup>

In 1884 Major Serpa Pinto hoisted his flag as consul-general at Zanzibar,<sup>4</sup> and in November 1885 Kirk was instructed to assist him, as he was then assisting Knorr, in negotiating another commercial treaty on the new model. But he soon discovered that the Portuguese were pursuing their old objective. It was not to be a commercial treaty. It would deal only with the fron-

<sup>1</sup> K. to S., 16. ix. 79: K.P. Vc. 188. For details see *Papers on the East African Slave Trade*, in Rhodes House Library, Oxford.

<sup>2</sup> K. to S., 27. x. 79: K.P. Vc. 209. From Seyyid Said's time onwards foreign consulates were not allowed at Zanzibar without treaties.

<sup>3</sup> Miles to Granville, 22. vi. 83: K.P. Xa. 155. Text of treaty in *S.P.* lxx (1878-9), 1246.

<sup>4</sup> K. to G., 10. vii. 84: K.P. Xb. 218.

tier, which, it was proposed, should run from the point of Cape Delgado westwards through the promontory until it joined the Rovuma. Of the Sultan's rights in Tungi Bay Kirk had no doubt. He had long maintained a customs-house, he reported, at the mouth of the Mninjani.<sup>1</sup> But the Portuguese Government were no longer content with mere discussion. Bismarck had shown them how to negotiate, and it was soon known at Zanzibar that Portuguese troops had been posted on the south bank of the Mninjani and Portuguese gunboats were cruising in the bay. British questions at Lisbon elicited the bland reply that the troops had been stationed on the river 'to prevent Arab raids and more effectually to watch the coast against the Slave Trade', that the Portuguese flag had been fired on across the river, and that, while the Portuguese had no intention of annexing Tungi Bay, they must defend themselves, if attacked. On April 14, 1886, Pinto suddenly demanded the removal of the Zanzibar posts from the whole of Tungi Bay, and, when Barghash refused, he lowered his flag and announced his impending departure. Pinto arranged that Portuguese subjects should be protected by the German consul—a choice he had made, so he told Kirk, as being 'the most offensive to the Sultan'. Next day an ultimatum arrived from Lisbon. The terms of the Sultan's answer to Pinto had been 'offensive to the national dignity', and immediate satisfaction must be given within twenty-four hours. Seeing that Germany was apparently backing Portugal, Barghash surrendered. He undertook to salute the Portuguese flag by way of apology, and to 'place the frontier question in course of settlement' after six months. One more humiliation had been imposed on Barghash, and with that, for the moment, the Portuguese Government were content.<sup>2</sup>

There was one more treaty. At the instance, presumably, of the shipping firms of Trieste, the Austrian Government concluded with the Sultan a convention 'for the regulation of commercial and maritime relations' in 1887. It was only concerned with trade, shipping and consuls, and was only to run for ten years.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> K. to S., 15. i. 86: K.P. XII. pt. iv. 58.

<sup>2</sup> K. to S., 30. xii. 85: K.P. XII. pt. iii. 56. Petre to S., 2. i. 86; K. to S. 8. i. 86; S. to K., 14. i. 86; K. to S., 15. ii. 86: K.P. XII. pt. iv. 1, 9, 21, 115. K. to Rosebery, 15, 16 and 17. iv. 86: K.P. XII. pt. v. 28, 30, 32.

<sup>3</sup> Text in *S.P.* lxxviii (1886-7), 942.

## XIX

### DELIMITATION AND PARTITION

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#### I

In a little over four months from the time of the naval demonstration the first two points of the German programme had been secured. Barghash had acquiesced in the German protectorate and in a new fiscal system which would facilitate its economic development. The third and most difficult point had still to be decided—the delimitation of the Sultan's dominions. Until that was done the new treaties could not operate. Both the German and the British Treaties had made provision for the payment of duties at the Sultan's ports and for the transit of goods between the Sultan's dominions and an undefined area to the west of them. What then were his ports and where lay his western frontier? And behind those questions lay another. Bismarck had accepted the British claim to an 'interest' in the northern part of the interior. Where was the line to be drawn between that British area and the German areas in Usagara and at Witu?

No time had been lost in constituting the Delimitation Commission. The French Government, which in view of the Declaration of 1862 had been invited to take part in it, appointed their representative, M. Patrimonio, consul-general at Beirut, at the end of September 1885.<sup>1</sup> In the course of October the German Government appointed Dr. Schmidt, consul-general at Cairo<sup>2</sup>—not, perhaps, an ideal choice since, though Schmidt had acted as protocolist at the Congo Conference and was therefore well acquainted with African questions, he was closely related to the head of one of the German firms doing business in East

<sup>1</sup> Waddington to Salisbury, 29. ix. 85: K.P. XII. pt. ii. 120.

<sup>2</sup> Malet to S., 9. x. 85: *ibid.*, 126.

Africa.<sup>1</sup> A few days later Colonel H. H. Kitchener was appointed British representative. Now thirty-five years old, he had served as intelligence officer in Wolseley's expedition up the Nile to rescue Gordon in 1884-5, and from his previous survey-work in Palestine, Cyprus and Sinai he had acquired a knowledge of Arabic and of Arab life. 'I have every confidence', wrote Salisbury in informing him of his appointment, 'in the spirit of moderation and impartiality with which the Commission will be animated in the discharge of their arduous and delicate mission,' and he looked forward to their conclusions being 'acceptable to all parties' and 'based on sound principles of law and justice'.<sup>2</sup>

This was, no doubt, official optimism; for already, as a prelude to the work of the Commission, the British and German Governments had taken up positions which were difficult to reconcile. The former had declared that 'the Zanzibar coast rights extend certainly from Portuguese territory to Port Durnford and that, as far as our information goes, Zanzibar has exercised territorial rights at all important points up to Warsheikh'.<sup>3</sup> The German Government, on the other hand, had 'started from the assumption . . . that it is only the larger islands of Zanzibar, Pemba and Mafia which are under the absolute dominion of the Sultan', who had 'never had an uninterrupted and solid possession of the coast'. In the interior 'there can be no question of any sovereignty'. The Commission's task, therefore, will be merely 'to inquire what points on the coast are in the possession of the Sultan, and how far the small strip of coast extends over which he has hitherto exercised a nominal sovereignty'. . . .<sup>4</sup> It would be a remarkable achievement if such conflicting *a priori* opinions could be woven into a unanimous judgment based on law and justice.

At the last moment the Portuguese Government demanded representation on the Commission. 'Except England', wrote

<sup>1</sup> Memorandum by Anderson, 28. vii. 86: inserted in K.P. XIII. pt. vi. 42.

<sup>2</sup> S. to K., 17. x. 85: K.P. XII. pt. ii. 138.

<sup>3</sup> S. to K., 10. x. 85: K.P. XII. pt. ii. 49.

<sup>4</sup> Plessen to S., 20. viii. 85: *ibid.*, 59. Salisbury told the French ambassador in London that Bismarck had instructed Schmidt to reject all the Sultan's claims on the mainland and had asked the British Government to give Kitchener the same instructions. Waddington to de Freycinet, 23. xii. 85: D.D.F. series i, vi. 163.

their minister in London, 'no nation is more interested in what happens at Zanzibar than Portugal.' Bismarck, while strongly opposed to the inclusion of a Portuguese member, was willing to acquiesce if Britain and France desired it. They did not. The Portuguese minister was informed that it was too late to suggest a change in the constitution of the Commission, since its members were already on their way to Zanzibar.<sup>1</sup>

On November 29 Kitchener arrived at Zanzibar in H.M.S. *Briton*, having spent a day *en route* at Mombasa, inspecting the harbours and visiting the Rabai mission. At the same time Schmidt arrived in the *Gneisenau*. They found that their French colleague had arrived on the 15th, but had left next day in a French gunboat on a 'secret mission'.<sup>2</sup> He had asked Kirk to say that he would return as soon as possible; but he did not return, and Kitchener and Schmidt had to spend an idle week till on December 5 M. Raffray, the French consul-general, received instructions to act in Património's place.<sup>3</sup>

The first official meeting of the Commission was held on December 10 when only formal business was transacted. At the second meeting on December 14 it was decided unanimously and without discussion that the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba and any islets within twelve miles of them were 'integral parts of the Sultanate of Zanzibar'.<sup>4</sup> At this meeting also the question of the Commission's relations with the Sultan was raised for the first time. Barghash had been asked not, of course, to participate in the work of the Commission on an equal footing with the three Governments but to appoint an agent to represent his interests. He had appointed Mathews, and Schmidt and Raffray now drafted a letter to Mathews telling him that his only function was to answer questions, a number of which were appended. In other words he was not to be allowed to state the Sultan's case as he chose, nor to call attention to points not raised by the Commissioners. Kitchener dissented. Such treatment of Mathews, he reported to the Foreign Office, was bound to cause difficulties with the Sultan whose co-operation was essential if the facts of the situation were to be fully understood.<sup>5</sup> He waived

<sup>1</sup> D'Antas to S., 10. and 12. xi. 85; M. to S., 17. xi. 85; S. to d'A., 25. xi. 85; K.P. XII. pt. iii. 23, 26, 35.

<sup>2</sup> K. to S., 18. xi. 85; *ibid.*, 51; H. K. to S., 21. xii. 85; K.P. XII. pt. iv. 45.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*; *procès-verbaux*. nos. 1 and 2 enclosed.

<sup>5</sup> H. K. to S., 18. i. 86; K.P. XII. pt. iv. 73.

his opinion—it was early days—but he was soon proved right. Barghash was in a suspicious and resentful mood. A fortnight earlier he had reluctantly signed a treaty he disliked, but this new issue seemed far more serious. For the questions put to Mathews as to Governors and garrisons covered the whole extent of his dominions on the coast. What was the purpose of the Commission, he asked, except to fix the frontiers of the German Protectorate? And he cancelled Mathews' appointment pending an answer to that question. The three consuls explained to him that, though the limits of his dominions were in fact to be defined, they would henceforward be guaranteed by three great Powers, since Germany had undertaken to adhere to the Anglo-French Declaration. But, even when this pledge had been confirmed, as he insisted it must be, by the three Governments, Barghash was still by no means reassured; and when the Commission began its inspection of the coast, Mathews did not accompany it<sup>1</sup>—to the German member's satisfaction, so Kirk believed. 'If I am not greatly mistaken', he wrote, 'Dr. Schmidt, . . . if he had the arranging of matters, would keep the Sultan and his officials in the dark.'<sup>2</sup>

That was not the only nor the most serious disagreement which had betrayed itself at this opening stage of the Commission's work. In a preliminary discussion of the coast Kitchener had expressed the view that the Sultan's authority at any two successive ports along the coast should be assumed to cover the stretch of territory between them. Schmidt had promptly cabled this news to Berlin, and in due course von Plessen, first secretary to Hatzfeldt, the new ambassador in London, had complained to Salisbury about this 'inadmissible doctrine' and asked him 'to correct the action of the Commissioner in that respect'. 'A Commissioner', Salisbury replied, was 'in the nature of a judge', and he could not interfere with his decisions, which, however, the Governments concerned were not bound to accept.<sup>3</sup>

## 2

Between January 19 and February 7 the Commission inspected the coast from Tungi Bay, where they observed the

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, and Lyons to Rosbery and to de Freycinet, 23. ii. 86: *ibid.*, 91.

<sup>2</sup> K. to S., 15. i. 86: *ibid.*, 71.

<sup>3</sup> S. to Malet, 23. i. 86: *ibid.*, 54.

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Portuguese and Zanzibar flags flying on their respective sides of the Mninjani, to Kisiju, 40 miles south of Dar-es-Salaam. 'The Sultan's authority and government', Kitchener reported, 'were represented at every place visited by the Commission', though sometimes it was only a village. 'The Sultan's officials were in every case most courteous, and their respectable appearance made a very favourable impression on the Commission.' At Tungi, Mikindani, Lindi, Kilwa, Kikunya and Kisiju there were Governors or *walis*, all Omani Arabs. At Lindi and Kilwa there was also a *kadi* to administer justice. At seven other smaller places<sup>1</sup> there were sub-governors or *akidas*. Each *wali* and *akida* had a small garrison. At the seat of each *wali* there was a 'native chief', who performed certain duties under the *wali* and acted as his intermediary with the natives. All these chiefs were bound to visit Zanzibar once a year to pay homage to the Sultan.<sup>2</sup>

This evidence clearly showed how Barghash's authority on this part of the coast had been stiffened up since Frere had made light of it in 1873,<sup>3</sup> and it convinced the Commission. Schmidt told Kitchener 'unofficially' that he regarded the Sultan's authority along that portion of the coast as established beyond doubt, but that 'he desired to communicate with his Government before officially stating his opinion'.<sup>4</sup>

So far, so good. But the Sultan's authority in the interior was another matter. The Commission found the *walis* reluctant to answer questions about it, seemingly because they feared inquiries about the Slave Trade. But the native chiefs were more forthcoming. The chief at Lindi stated that 'he had been sent with an official from the Sultan to the east side of Lake Nyasa to inquire into the murder of a white man there'—evidently the unfortunate Roscher.<sup>5</sup> All the tribes, he said, 'obeyed the Sultan'. The chief at Tungi said the same. But the evidence about the interior was necessarily less convincing than the evidence about the coast, and Kitchener himself was dubious. 'Although I believe the Sultan's influence is very great among the tribes of

<sup>1</sup> Mchinga, Kiswere, Samanga, Kiunga, Sudi, Kilwa Kisiwani, and Chole (on Mafia Island).

<sup>2</sup> K. to R., 10. ii. 86; K.P. XII. pt. iv. 102.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 247, above.

<sup>4</sup> K. to R., 10. ii. 86, as cited above.

<sup>5</sup> See p. 110, above. The text says 'west side', clearly a mistake or misprint.



the interior, I do not consider his effective government is at present established further inland than from 40 to 50 miles from the coast in the area so far examined. . . .<sup>1</sup>

One other important fact had been observed by Kitchener. 'I was surprised to find in every place visited by the Commission a large number of "banyan" and other British Indian subjects. Besides renting the customs all along the coast from the Sultan these men appear to have the whole of the local trade, as well as that with the interior, entirely in their hands. There must have been over 1,000 of them on that part of the coast.'<sup>2</sup> That Kitchener, like Frere and all other newcomers to East Africa, was surprised at this shows, it may be noted incidentally, how scrupulously Kirk left him at this stage to obtain his information and form his opinions by himself.

While they were at Kilwa in the course of this tour Kitchener and Raffray were taken aback by the sudden appearance of Gustav Denhardt, the younger of the two brothers of Witu fame, and still more perturbed when Schmidt introduced him to them as his interpreter. They could scarcely object without an open breach with Schmidt, though Denhardt's interest in the question of delimitation was obvious; but they observed that Schmidt had another interpreter who did the work. 'I never heard M. Denhardt translate anything at all,' wrote Kitchener.<sup>3</sup> Since the German Government had successfully objected to the appointment of C. S. Smith, vice-consul at Kilwa, as Kitchener's assistant, inquiries about Denhardt were made in Berlin. But they were brushed aside. Denhardt, the British *chargé d'affaires* was told, was not an official like Smith. Nor was he a member of the German East African Society. Nor had he any personal interest in the Commission's work. He was only needed as an interpreter in the examination of Swahili witnesses.<sup>4</sup>

Evidently the relations between Schmidt and his colleagues on this tour were none too comfortable, and they were further disturbed by the news which met them on their return to Zanzibar.

<sup>1</sup> K. to R., 10. ii. 86, enclosing copies of the official notes taken at each place: K.P. XII. pt. iv. 102.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Memo. by Scott, 29. iii. 86: K.P. XII. pt. v. 3.

One of the most peculiar circumstances of this peculiar Commission was the fact that the territorial basis of the decisions it had to make was being changed while it was actually at work. Bismarck, it will be remembered, when the map of the German Protectorate was produced in June 1885, had pointed out that German treaty-makers were still at work and might make additions to it. They did. Throughout the summer and autumn of 1885 the East African Society was busy following up its founder's work. From May to August, while Jühlke was operating in Chagga,<sup>1</sup> an expedition under Herr Hörnecke ascended the River Tana and concluded treaties to the south of it in an area contiguous with that acquired by the brothers Denhardt. In June Lieutenant Schlüter with two companions joined Pfeil<sup>2</sup> in Usagara and marched with him through Uhehe, Ubena and Mahenge. By the end of the year they had spread a network of treaties over most of the interior westwards to Lake Nyasa and southwards to the Rovuma. In August Lieutenant Schmidt and a merchant named Söhngé began working nearer the coast. They made seven treaties between Usagara and Bagamoyo—right across the main trade-route, it will be observed, and in the district where the Sultan's claims were strongest—and fourteen more to the south, covering Usaramo and all the country between Ukami and the Rufiji. In September and again in November Hörnecke made treaties with the adventurous Arab who had recently established himself at Obbia.<sup>3</sup> He now styled himself 'the grand Sultan of all the Somali', and he generously conceded to the Company sovereign rights and a monopoly of trade all the way from Berbera to Warsheikh. Finally, on October 12, Dr. Lucas, the Company's representative, arrived at Zanzibar to direct and supervise its operations.<sup>4</sup>

All this treaty-making not only took for granted that the Sultan had no authority at any distance from the coast, it undermined such respect as the inland tribes had acquired for the existing order. Whether they admitted a direct allegiance to

<sup>1</sup> See p. 420, above.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 352, above.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 414, above.

<sup>4</sup> Chéradame, 91-6. Another account of the German expeditions is given by B. Kurtze, *Die Deutsch-Ostafrikanische Gesellschaft* (Jena, 1913), 54-6.

Zanzibar or not, they had recognised that the strongest power in the little world they knew was that of the Sultan and 'the great *balozzi*'. But now they saw the agents of another people, marching here and there through their country, making light of the authorities, Arab or British, at Zanzibar, treating the land as if it were already theirs. The effect was naturally unsettling. Inter-tribal fighting and slave-raiding revived. Under stress of a severe famine which afflicted most of the country in the winter of 1884-5, parents began again to sell their children.<sup>1</sup> Slaves for sale were once more to be seen on the coast. Kirk reported in the summer a 'marked revival' of the Slave Trade even on the mainland directly opposite Zanzibar. Five dhows had been caught, one of them with over forty slaves in it.<sup>2</sup> 'I believe', wrote Kirk again a year later, 'the slave traffic to have been greater last year than it has been for some time back.' It had not been the Sultan's fault. He had sent Mathews with a sufficient force to stop it. 'But that officer had only visited one section where the movement was misrepresented by German agents for political reasons as a demonstration against the new German pretensions in Usagara. . . . So long as rebellion is openly encouraged and the Sultan's right to exercise authority called in question by subjects of European Powers, His Highness is not likely to estrange his people by active steps in a matter that interests us chiefly and for which he can only be held responsible if his sovereignty is acknowledged. . . .'<sup>3</sup> A melancholy but very logical postscript to the story of 1873 and 1876.

There was another feature of the situation in the interior, a new one. The knowledge that the Germans were trying to take from them what they prized above all else, their land, was spreading far and wide among the tribes of the interior and exciting a hatred of white men they had never felt before. And a hatred of all white men. The British missionaries, who far outnumbered the few other Europeans so far settled in the country, soon became aware of it. The C.M.S. pioneers in Uganda reported in the autumn of 1885 that Mwanga and his people now suspected Europeans of all nations as wanting 'to eat the country', and that the danger which they rightly thought to be

<sup>1</sup> K. to Allen, 30. i. 85: Anti-Slavery Society Archives.

<sup>2</sup> K. to S., 1. viii. 85: K.P. XII. pt. ii. 70.

<sup>3</sup> K. to R., 1. vii. 86: K.P. XIII. pt. vi. 59.

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threatening Hannington was the result of German doings.<sup>1</sup> When Fischer returned to Zanzibar in the summer of 1886 from the southern end of Lake Victoria, he frankly admitted that Hannington's murder was due to the German invasion of Usagara and its neighbourhood. 'Africa, in fact,' wrote Kirk, 'is being shut to all suspected of having any connexion with Germany.' The promise of an easy and peaceful 'opening up' of the interior by winning the confidence of the natives was being blighted. 'Now nothing but suspicion exists'—the only result so far of German 'colonisation'. 'No one states it more clearly than Dr. Fischer, himself a German, devoted to advancing the true interests of his country.'<sup>2</sup>

There was bloodshed too, of course. Hörnecke was involved in a 'regrettable incident' near Witu and had a fight with a party of Zanzibar Arabs up the Tana. But the natives did not always come off worst. In October 1885 Schmidt and Söhnge, whose treaty-work has been mentioned above, got into trouble in Usagara. From the information obtained by the C.M.S. missionaries at Mamboia it appeared that either Schmidt or Söhnge had ordered a villager to join their caravan, and on his refusal had 'struck him in the mouth with his gun, knocking out two teeth'. One of the porters was then shot dead with a revolver. Thereupon the villagers, who also had firearms, were told by their chief to open fire. Schmidt had his leg broken by one bullet and was wounded in the back by another. Söhnge was wounded in the arm and ran away. Schmidt, after lying two days alone in the 'bush', was found by the missionaries and carried to the coast, where Kirk reported his arrival on November 6.<sup>3</sup> Ironically enough, it was a file of Mathews' men, who were still holding the Sultan's post at Mamboia pending the demarcation of the frontier, that went to the scene of the trouble and punished those impulsive villagers.<sup>4</sup>

All this movement and disturbance were still going on, as has been said, after the Commission had begun its work, and in the

<sup>1</sup> Lay-Secretary of C.M.S. to F.O., 5. i. 86, enclosing report from A. M. Mackay, 29. ix. 85; K.P. XII. pt. iv. 5.

<sup>2</sup> K. to R., 3. vii. 86; K.P. XIII. pt. vi. 61.

<sup>3</sup> J. Roscoe's report, 11. xi. 85, enclosed in C.M.S. to F.O., 5. i. 86; K.P. XII. pt. iv. 5; K. to S., 6. xi. 85; K.P. XII. pt. iii. 10.

<sup>4</sup> K. to S., 9. xi. 85; *ibid.*, 39.

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Usagara area at any rate the outcome of it would inevitably affect its decisions. Another doubtful area was Chagga, and on December 29 Kirk cabled that a German expedition with 200 porters was starting for Kilimanjaro. The Society's agents, he added, were 'intriguing all along the coast. Every means will be used by them to secure a coast-port and so evade the recent treaty.' This telegram irritated Salisbury, for he had recently been assured by von Plessen that no action would be taken with regard to the rival German and British claims in the Kilimanjaro area until the Commission had reported. He told Malet to protest. The German Government were to be informed that in the British Government's opinion 'expeditions of this kind concluded at this juncture can hardly fail to complicate the labours of the Commission and will create a very bad impression upon the Sultan of Zanzibar'.<sup>1</sup> But if any restraining orders were sent to Zanzibar, they must only have applied to the interior, and Kirk's foresight was soon proved right once more. At the end of January, while the Commission was still on its tour in the south, Lucas and some of his fellow-members of the Society chartered a ship and proceeded to Gasi, a village on the coast some 25 miles south of Mombasa. That incorrigible mischief-maker, Mbaruk, had recently been permitted by Barghash to make there the peaceful home he had so often professed to desire.<sup>2</sup> As lately as November 22, 1885, he had written a letter of repentance and submission to Barghash—'Please, my master, allow me the monthly salary as before'—yet it was with him as 'Sultan of Gasi' that Lucas made a treaty. The German merchant flag and the Company's flag were hoisted and saluted. The Governor of Mombasa at once informed Barghash who ordered an immediate attack with irregular troops. They closed in on Gasi from north and south, and Mbaruk fled inland with the flags.<sup>3</sup>

Kitchener and Raffray took a serious view of Lucas' proceedings. They asked Schmidt to agree to a joint appeal to Consul-General Arendt, but he refused to act with them and pointed out that the Commission had had no 'official information' of

<sup>1</sup> S. to M., 31. xii. 85; *ibid.*, 58.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 248-9 and 254-5 above, and for further details, K. to S., 12. ii. 86; K.P. XII. pt. iv. 113.

<sup>3</sup> K. to S., as in preceding note, enclosing Mbaruk to Sultan, 22. xi. 85.

events at Gasi. Finally they called on Arendt, who 'appeared in a rather excited state' and for that reason, doubtless, blurted out that 'it would be a great advantage for Germany if the Commission were broken up'; but he admitted that he had not ratified Lucas' action at Gasi and said he had forbidden him 'to put up any more flags on the coast' while the Commission was sitting. Kitchener reported that throughout these negotiations he and his French colleague had 'acted in the most conciliatory spirit towards Germany', but they both felt 'that there is a tendency to break up the Commission among the German officials as its existence doubtless greatly hampers such acts as those at Gasi'. Incidentally Raffray had told him a curious story. Soon after he had been instructed to take Patrimonio's place, the new German consul-general, Dr. Arendt, who had succeeded Travers at the end of 1885, had informed him that 'owing to an arrangement between the French and German Governments on the subject, he would be expected to act on the Commission entirely with Germany'. He had cabled at once to Paris and was told that there was no such arrangement and that he was to 'act with perfect impartiality'. 'I may add', wrote Kitchener drily, 'that on my voyage out . . . the German consul-general once or twice spoke to me of the great help Prince Bismarck would give to England in Egypt if I acted on the Commission in the German interest.'<sup>1</sup>

Meantime the controversy had been settled in Berlin. Bismarck meant to get his way, but not, if he could manage it, without the sanction of an international tribunal. So Scott was told that the Berlin representatives of the East African Company were 'quite taken aback' at the report of what their agents had done at Gasi and had promised to send them a warning at once against 'such an unjustifiable course of action'.<sup>2</sup> A few hours later Arendt cabled that the 'incident had been satisfactorily closed and the Sultan reassured'.<sup>3</sup>

## 4

Between February 22 and March 8 the Commissioners paid their second visit to the coast. Evidence was taken at Saadani,

<sup>1</sup> H. K. to S., 14. ii. 86; K.P. XII. pt. iv. 117.

<sup>2</sup> Scott to R., 13. ii. 86: *ibid.*, 66.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

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Pangani, Tanga, Vanga, Wasin, Gasi, Mombasa and Takaungu. Kitchener summed it up as follows: 'The Sultan's government was found everywhere firmly established, and the Commission was unable to obtain any information having a contrary tendency, although it visited some people secretly in their houses so that they might be perfectly free to make any declaration without fear of the consequences. The Governors appear to administer justice and maintain order in a manner suitable to the country, and the rapid and complete way in which Mbaruk's rising at Gasi was put down by the Sultan's troops shows that His Highness has a good military organisation and complete power on this part of the coast. There are, I believe, very few coastlines in the world where there are so many Governors, garrisoned places, and customs-houses as are found on the Zanzibar coastline examined by the Commission up to the present.' It was clear, then, that the stretches of seaboard between port and port were under the Sultan's effective control. Kitchener, indeed, observed from his ship, as it coasted along, that 'at small villages and sometimes at single houses red Sultan's flags were frequently displayed'.<sup>1</sup>

Some evidence was obtained, for what it was worth, as to the Sultan's powers inland. The Governor of Pangani declared that there were no fixed limits to the Sultan's jurisdiction in the interior. 'All Usambara obeys him.' The Governor of Tanga said he had lately sent orders, which had been obeyed, for the payment of debts by tribesmen whose villages lay three days' march or so from Tanga.<sup>2</sup> But Schmidt waved all such statements aside. At a meeting of the Commission after its return to Zanzibar he put it on record that the evidence of the *akida* at Gasi, being contrary, he asserted, to notorious facts, was 'sufficiently significant to compromise generally the confidence to be put in the evidence given by the Sultan's authorities'.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> H. K. to R., 15. iii. 86; K.P. XII. pt. v. 16.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 'official notes' of evidence enclosed. The size of the population and the strength of the garrisons at the chief places visited by the Commission are given in the *procès-verbal* as follows: Dar-es-Salaam, 5,000, 100; Pangani, 3,500, 50; Tanga, 2,000-3,000, 60; Vanga, 2,500, 20; Mombasa, population not stated, 350; Takaungu, 1,500, 120. The troops are all described as 'Arab' but presumably they included 'Baluchis'. It would seem that Mathews kept his African 'army' (apart from the post at Mamboia) as a striking force at Zanzibar.

<sup>3</sup> *Procès-verbal* no. 7: enclosed in H. K. to R., 30. iv. 6; K.P. XII. pt. v. 55.

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Between March 23 and April 8 the Commissioners made their third and last tour in the course of which they visited Kismayu, Barawa, Mogadishu, Merka, Pate, Lamu, Kipini and Malindi. At Pate the local chief represented the Sultan from whom he received a salary. At all the other places Governors and at all but one garrisons were installed, though at Lamu and Kipini the Governor was absent at the time of the Commission's arrival.<sup>1</sup>

It was on this tour that Denhardt became active. He had not accompanied Schmidt on the second tour, but he was present at the taking of evidence northwards of Takaungu, and for the first time he assisted in interpreting. Kitchener took exception to this on more grounds than one. In the first place Denhardt had a personal interest in the Witu area in which Simba had leased from 80 to 100 square miles of land to his brother and himself. He had had a hand in arranging the deputation which came from Witu to meet the Commission at Kipini, and it was only 'after some trouble' that Kitchener succeeded in preventing his attendance at that meeting. He was recognised, moreover, by witnesses at other places in the neighbourhood. At Lamu, indeed, he and his brother had lived for a long time. And, finally, Kitchener caught him out once in mistranslating and once in giving Schmidt false information. On the first occasion the official notes were corrected; on the second Schmidt apologised to his colleagues.<sup>2</sup>

All the ports and posts on the coast, excepting Bagamoyo and Port Durnford, had now been examined, and the Commission would soon have to face the awkward task of making its decisions. There had been small chance of unanimity at the outset, and now there was practically none. But Schmidt made one effort. On their return to Zanzibar they learned that Monsieur G. Lemaire was on his way out to take the place on the Commission which Raffray had provisionally filled since Patrimonio's mysterious departure; and Schmidt suggested to Kitchener that they might 'come to some agreement' before Lemaire's arrival. Kitchener, for his part, seems

<sup>1</sup> Populations: Barawa 3,000-4,000, Mogadishu 4,000-5,000. Garrisons: Kismayu 200, Barawa 146, Mogadishu 198, Merka 320, Lamu over 200, Malindi 150. 'Official notes', enclosed in H. K. to R. as cited in preceding note.

<sup>2</sup> H. K. to K., 1. vi. 86: K.P. XIII. pt. vi. 4.



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to have thought the time had come to be frank. 'I said nothing would give me greater pleasure. He then asked me my opinion on the Sultan's sovereignty of the coast-line that we had examined. I said that I had not the least doubt as to the Sultan's complete sovereignty of the coast from the Mninjani River in Tungi Bay on the south as far as Tula Island, near Port Durnford; . . . that between that place and Kismayu I had not quite made up my mind, owing to our not having visited Port Durnford; that to the north of Kismayu in Somaliland I considered the complete sovereignty of the Sultan was restricted to the towns and military posts occupied by him in that country. Although the Sultan's complete and effective sovereignty was, in my opinion, thus restricted, I considered that his influence was very great over the whole coast. . . . Owing to the wild nomad type of the Somalis—unlike the inhabitants of the coast further south—I thought that it was very difficult to make them submit to discipline, law, or order, but that they all appeared to pay customs-duties to the Sultan.'

'Dr. Schmidt said he agreed with me up to Malindi . . . but from there to Port Durnford he had doubts of the Sultan's sovereignty between the garrisoned positions he held on the coast.' Should not the Sultan be asked 'to prove his rights'? To that Kitchener replied that the Sultan was an interested party and that he doubted whether the Commissioners were entitled 'to demand that he should prove his rights before us'. Thereupon Schmidt closed the conversation. 'He said he regretted our want of accord and that he should report it to his Government.' Kitchener also expressed regret, but added that, 'I could not see black where there was white, and that I had not the least doubt in my own mind after personal inspection and from all the information I had procured in Zanzibar that the coast-limits of the Sultanate were as I described them. As to the extension into the interior I told Dr. Schmidt that I thought it would vary at different parts of the coast, but that its consideration came under the third portion of our work and need not be discussed at present.'<sup>1</sup>

In the course of this first open conflict of opinion Schmidt had been in one respect even franker than Kitchener. He had introduced 'extraneous considerations'. The Commissioners ought to

<sup>1</sup> H. K. to R., 30. iv. 86; K.P. XII. pt. v. 53.

consider, he had said, 'whether in giving their decision for the Sultan's sovereignty on the coast they were not closing Central Africa to trade and civilisation.' But Kitchener was not to be drawn. It was a question of 'vast importance', he replied, but 'outside our instructions'. That did not mean, of course, that he had formed no opinion on that cardinal issue. On the contrary he had formed a very definite opinion; and, whether it sprang entirely from his own observations—and in view of Kirk's caution at an earlier stage that may have been so—or whether it had been fostered by conversations at the British consulate, it was the same opinion as Kirk's. In his report to the Foreign Office Kitchener stated it in uncompromising terms. After mentioning Schmidt's proposal, 'My views on this subject are', he went on, 'that the Sultan of Zanzibar by his enlightened rule and influence has done much and will in future do more to assist in opening up Central Africa. Every expedition has had to thank him for his assistance, and mission-stations, both French and English, have largely benefited from his protection and aid. His rule is one of most perfect freedom; any one can settle in his towns or ports for trade or colonisation and receives protection; the numerous British Indian subjects established all along the coast are proof of this. His enormous influence with the chiefs and people of the interior is notorious. . . .' No European Government, he continued, would want to send troops to enforce law and order in 'the swamps and deserts' of the interior; but, if the Sultan's dominions on the coast are guaranteed, he can be 'made to do the police-work of Central Africa', while it is being 'opened up' to trade and civilisation under the terms of the new German and British treaties. The character of the Sultan's rule might well be improved. It should be 'brought more into accord with our notions of correct government', but 'to upset or weaken his power on the coast and therefore his influence in the interior would be the surest and most effectual means of closing Central Africa to the efforts of those attempting to open up and develop it.'<sup>1</sup>

This appeal was addressed to Lord Rosebery who had taken over the Foreign Office when Gladstone formed his third administration in February 1886; and presumably Kitchener hoped that the policy he recommended might prevail. But Rosebery's

<sup>1</sup> H. K. to R., 30. iv. 86: *ibid*.

attitude to Bismarck's ideas about East Africa was the same as Salisbury's. Had he not himself suggested that 'easy and peaceable settlement . . . detrimental to the dignity of neither party'?

## 5

The 'third portion' of the Commission's work—the examination of the Sultan's claims in the interior—was never undertaken. On April 19 Schmidt told Kitchener that he did not wish to go to Kilimanjaro. The Sultan, he said, had sufficient influence there to ensure that all the evidence would be in his favour. Kitchener replied that he would not regard the visit as essential if Schmidt would abandon Jühlke's treaties which were 'manifest impostures' and 'injurious to British interests'. A decision on the point was deferred till Lemaire's arrival.<sup>1</sup>

He arrived on May 6, and at once, as Kitchener put it, 'gave a practical tone to the work of the Commission.' At a series of meetings between May 11 and 26 decisions were recorded covering all the coast from Tungi Bay to Lamu. They were not, of course, unanimous. Kitchener and Lemaire agreed that the Sultan's authority was valid at all the ports and posts and along the stretches of coast between them and that apart from one or two local variations it extended everywhere to a depth of 40 miles inland.<sup>2</sup> Schmidt, on the other hand, denied the Sultan's authority on the stretches of coast between the ports south of Kilwa, and only admitted its extension inland to a depth of ten miles up to Bagamoyo. North of that he allowed ten miles at Mombasa, but only five or less elsewhere. At Bagamoyo, on the basis of some treaties lately concluded by the East African Society, he gave the Sultan only three miles, and at Gasi, despite recent events, none at all, thus securing a corridor to the sea which, not being under the Sultan, could presumably be acquired by the Society from whomever they might recognise as its ruler. At the mouth of the Tana, likewise, a piece of coast was excluded from the Sultan's sovereignty and a similar corridor thus provided for Witu.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> H. K. to R., 19. iv. 86: *ibid.*, 35.

<sup>2</sup> At Pangani 50 miles; between Gasi and Takaungu 45; at Malindi 30.

<sup>3</sup> *Procès-verbaux* nos. 8-15, enclosed in H. K. to R., 5. vi. 86: K.P. XIII. pt. vi. 17-31. At the mouth of the Tana Schmidt limited the Sultan's authority to the walls of Kau and Kipini.

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The same divergence of opinion would doubtless have been put on record as to the rest of the coast if the Commission had been permitted to continue its proceedings in its own way. But at this point Bismarck suddenly intervened. He had received Schmidt's reports; he realised that there was no hope of genuine agreement; but he still desired some sort of international restriction on the Sultan's rights. He instructed Schmidt, therefore, to suggest to his colleagues that, since only unanimous opinions would be of practical use, they alone should thenceforth be recorded, all else being left to the Governments to decide. From this singular proposal Kitchener and Lemaire naturally dissented.<sup>1</sup> Apart from Zanzibar, Pemba and Mafia there had not been, nor were there likely to be, unanimous opinions in any ordinary sense of the words. It was evidently not intended that Schmidt should accept the majority view. Were Kitchener and Lemaire expected to accept his? . . . Bismarck, meantime, had made a seductive offer to the French Government who, as has been seen, were now less closely interested in Zanzibar than the British Government. If the Commission made a unanimous report, he said, Germany would join with France and Britain in guaranteeing its award, and would also give France a free hand in the Comoro Islands.<sup>2</sup> The offer was accepted, and on May 26 Lemaire was startled by the receipt of orders from Paris to agree to the 'unanimity plan'.<sup>3</sup> He informed his colleagues, and Kitchener cabled at once to Rosebery explaining that the German proposals will 'have the effect of suppressing the opinion of the majority' and expressing the hope that the British Government would oppose the new procedure.<sup>4</sup> Rosebery made inquiries in Paris and Berlin, and

<sup>1</sup> H. K. to R., 19. v. 86: K.P. XII. pt. v. 49A.

<sup>2</sup> R. to Malet, 29. v. 86: *ibid.*, 52. Courcel reported from Berlin on May 16 that Bismarck had raised the question of the Comoros (see pp. 345-6, above) and wished an understanding over East Africa in general. De Freycinet replied (May 17) that he had received a Note from the German Government on the subject and that he would discuss it with Courcel when he returned to Paris; he added that Lemaire had been instructed to behave on the Commission 'dans un grand esprit de conciliation' and that the French Government were prepared to consider any alterations in his instructions which the German Government might propose. D.D.F. series i, vol. vi. 253-4.

<sup>3</sup> H. K. to R., 26. v. 86: *ibid.*, 51. 'I could see that he was much surprised at the instructions he had received and would gladly have them modified.'

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

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on May 29 the German ambassador conveyed to him the offer of a joint guarantee which had been previously made to France. From an exchange of telegrams with Kirk he learned the essential points of the Commission's disagreement, namely, that in Schmidt's view the Sultan's authority on the coast was not continuous and extended only ten miles or less inland.<sup>1</sup> It was clear, therefore, what the German offer meant; but, if it were refused, Bismarck might seize the opportunity of breaking up the Commission as Kirk and Kitchener had intimated that the Germans at Zanzibar desired. Then, his freedom of action regained, he could define the Sultan's dominions as he chose, restricting them conceivably to Zanzibar and Pemba—unless, of course, the British Government were prepared to quarrel with him. And, since the Egyptian question was still unsettled, they were not. So on June 5 Rosebery sent Kirk a cable which brought the work of the Commission to a strange and abrupt conclusion. 'We gather from you that there is unanimity as to all ports between Tungi and Kilifi, but difference as to intervals between ports from Tungi to Dar-es-Salaam. If this is so, would not acceptance of proposal be advantageous to Sultan? Its rejection may lead to dissolution of Commission which would leave Germany free from any engagement to respect his territory. . . . If there is no formal record of unanimous awards, Kitchener might endeavour to induce the other Commissioners to agree to one.'<sup>2</sup>

Those instructions might perhaps have been more direct; but Kirk's opinion was still respected at the Foreign Office, and was not Kitchener 'in the nature of a judge'? There could be no mistaking, however, what Rosebery wanted, nor could it be overlooked that Germany's 'freedom', if the Commission should break up, was taken for granted. So Kirk and Kitchener did what was expected of them. It did not take long. The Commissioners met again on June 7 and proceeded at one sitting, without discussion, 'to register Dr. Schmidt's opinions from the *procès-verbaux* as the unanimous views of the Commission.' The northern coast was dealt with no less quickly. Schmidt conceded only the island of Lamu to the Sultan and only the towns of Kisimayu, Barawa, Merka and Mogadishu, his jurisdiction not to

<sup>1</sup> R. to K., 2. vi. 86; K. to R., 3. vi. 86: *ibid.*, 62, 62\*.

<sup>2</sup> R. to K., 5. vi. 86: *ibid.*, 63.

extend beyond their walls. 'No discussion took place,' to quote Kitchener's report. 'I merely pointed out to Dr. Schmidt that between Lamu and the north he had ignored several important garrisons of the Sultan's troops, established many years ago and containing in each case over 100 men, besides numerous smaller posts and government stations, and that his views were in total opposition to the notes taken at various places by the Commission. My remarks had not the least effect on Dr. Schmidt.'<sup>1</sup> But Kitchener, of course, had not supposed that Schmidt would abandon his position in the hour of victory. The danger, indeed, was that he might go back on it. 'Colonel Kitchener', Kirk wrote, 'has proceeded with great tact in inducing such a one as his German colleague to subscribe to any decision at all.'<sup>2</sup> As a matter of fact Schmidt was actually induced to make a concession: he allowed the Sultan's authority to be continuous from the River Mninjani to Kilwa. That closed the business. The problems of the interior, the Sultan's claims to Kilimanjaro or at Tabora or elsewhere, were left in the air. On June 9 the unanimous report was signed.<sup>3</sup>

But how, it may be asked, could that report be regarded as really unanimous? How could Schmidt's award of isolated towns with a narrow and interrupted strip of coastland be represented as being also his colleagues' award? The answer, though astonishing, is simple. The greater includes the less, and in stating that they 'unanimously recognised the sovereign rights' of the Sultan at certain points, the Commissioners did not actually say—though it was, of course, the obvious implication—that they disallowed those rights elsewhere. In other words, Kitchener and Lemaire agreed that the Sultan should have the ports and the ten-mile strip without saying that he ought also to have the intervening sea-board and thirty miles more inland. As Kitchener's biographer puts it, it was a clear case of *suppressio veri, suggestio falsi*;<sup>4</sup> and, while all Commissions naturally desire unanimity, it may well be doubted if any Com-

<sup>1</sup> H. K. to R., 7. vi. 86: K.P. XIII. pt. vi. 33.

<sup>2</sup> K. to R., 8. vi. 86: *ibid.*, 13.

<sup>3</sup> H. K. to R., 9. vi. 86, enclosing *procès-verbaux* nos. 16 and 17 and *procès-verbal spécial de constatation des opinions unanimes*: *ibid.*, 37-9.

<sup>4</sup> Sir George Arthur, *Life of Lord Kitchener* (London, 1920), i. 149-50.

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mission, international or other, has ever achieved it by such a curious device.

No blame, of course, can be attached to Kitchener. In signing that egregious document he had done what Rosebery had evidently wished him to do; but he was not content to leave it at that. In the dispatch which accompanied the report to the Foreign Office, he wrote: 'It appears to be generally considered that the work of the Commission is now at an end. I can only say I deeply regret, if such be the case, that the last act of the Commission should have necessarily been the recording of one member's, to my mind, biased opinion as the unanimous one of the Commission. I hope your Lordship will bear in mind, whatever use the German Government may make of this document, that the French Commissioner and myself are fully impressed with the truth of our original statements recorded in the *procès-verbaux* of the Commission as well as with the absolute untruth of Dr. Schmidt's views of the extent of the Sultan's dominions to the north of Lamu.'<sup>1</sup> Since, moreover, his [Kitchener's] opinions on that last stretch of coast had not been recorded and nothing at all had been said about the interior, he submitted a detailed and closely argued report of his own on 'the delimitation of the Sultan's territories' in those two areas. He extended the Sultan's seaboard strip to a depth of twenty miles between Kipini and Port Durnford and of ten miles between Port Durnford and the mouth of the Juba. From thence to Warsheikh he maintained that the Sultan had rights of a kind over the whole coast, but that he had not yet established 'effective sovereignty' over its 'most unruly' inhabitants except within a ten-mile radius of Barawa, Merka, Mogadishu and Warsheikh. As regards the interior he pointed out that the Sultan's authority at Tabora and Ujiji had long been recognised. While the Commission was at Zanzibar the Governor of Ujiji died and the Arabs sent to the Sultan asking him to appoint his successor, which he did. He therefore considered the country within a radius of twenty-five miles round those two 'colonies' to be under the Sultan's 'complete sovereignty'. The Sultan, moreover, claimed rights over the roads into the interior which his subjects had opened up and were continually traversing with their caravans, but these could not be determined till the boundaries of the

<sup>1</sup> K. to R., 7. vi. 86: K.P. XIII. pt. vi. 33.

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territory acquired by Germany had been fixed. Lastly, Kitchener declared that Jühlke's treaties in the Kilimanjaro area were invalid and Mathews' valid since the latter had been made first, had been fully understood by the natives, and had been confirmed by their subsequent delegations to Zanzibar. 'The Sultan's flag still waves in front of Mandara's house and generally throughout Chagga, and in my opinion the Sultan has clearly proved the priority of his claims and that he has established an effective protectorate, recognised by the chiefs and people, over the district of Kilimanjaro.'<sup>1</sup>

Having thus rounded off his work, Kitchener left for home in July to be met at Suez with the offer of the Governor-Generalship of the Eastern Sudan. There were to be many further stages in his varied career, but none of them was to be embellished by quite so queer an episode as that of the Zanzibar Commission.

### 6

In June 1886 Gladstone, defeated on Home Rule, advised a dissolution, and in July, having won the election, Salisbury took office for the third time with Lord Iddesleigh as his Foreign Secretary. 'Sir John Kirk is coming home,' Anderson told his new chief. 'It is understood that he intends to suggest a compromise by which the Germans will recognise continuity to Formosa Bay [i.e. Kipini], and that the Sultan will let them come in north of that point. Possibly, if a little time is left for the question to cool, and then a compromise of this description is proposed, all parties might be satisfied with the solution.'<sup>2</sup> A little later Iddesleigh told Malet to propose in Berlin a reunion of the Commissioners in Europe<sup>3</sup>—a disconcerting suggestion which happily came to nothing. The final settlement of the delimitation question was in fact to be brought about in conjunction with that of another question. The two Governments had not finished with East African territory when the Sultan's share of it had been defined. Delimitation was the prelude to Partition.

The germinal idea of partition had been born when Holm-

<sup>1</sup> Report as cited, enclosed in H. K. to R., 30. vi. 86: *ibid.*, 43.

<sup>2</sup> Memorandum inserted in K.P. XIII. pt. vi. 42.

<sup>3</sup> I. to M., 17. viii. 86: *ibid.*, 65.



wood had written that letter to Hutton about the Kenya Highlands in April 1885, and Aberdare and his associates had impressed on the Foreign Office the necessity of adopting Holmwood's scheme. The project, as has been seen, had been disclosed to Bismarck and obtained his provisional assent, but Mackinnon's irresolution seemed to have killed it, till in the autumn, on the eve of the Commission's departure for Zanzibar, it suddenly came to life again. Harry Johnston, now British vice-consul in the Cameroons, had decided to make over the rights he had secured on the slopes of Kilimanjaro to Hutton. He wrote at the same time to Anderson, enclosing a copy of his 'treaty' at Taveta. 'British merchants', he remarked, 'are the most unreasonable of men nowadays. They expect the Government to do everything for them and see no occasion for private enterprise of their own.'<sup>1</sup> Those were Anderson's sentiments also. It was Mackinnon, not he, who had hesitated in the spring, and he was frankly delighted with the 'treaty'. 'It is the very thing we want,' he minuted; 'a concession to a British subject anterior to the German protectorate.'<sup>2</sup> And by now those British merchants had been spurred at last into action. On November 5 Hutton wrote to Salisbury informing him that he was making arrangements to take possession of the 'property' transferred to him by Johnston and 'to commence British trade in the specified districts either in my own name or in association with other British subjects'.<sup>3</sup> But those arrangements were presently held up. The German Government, as has been observed, agreed in December that the rival claims to Kilimanjaro should be referred to the Commission and that in the meantime the activities of the treaty-makers on both sides should be restrained. For some months, therefore, nothing happened; but by May 1886, when the Commission's work, though near its end, was not quite ended, Mackinnon and Hutton had organised an expedition 'to look after the property ceded by Johnston' at

<sup>1</sup> J. to A., 29. x. 85; K.P. XII. pt. iii. 5. Kitchener, also, was critical of Mackinnon. After the formation of the Imperial British East Africa Company in 1888 with Mackinnon as president (see p. 482 below), he wrote to Kirk, who was one of the directors: 'I hope you will now take up the East African Co. strongly and get rid of Mackinnon. Otherwise I greatly fear that our future work in Africa will become the laughing stock of Europe.' H. K. to K., 12. vii. 90: K.P. *misc.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> H. to S., 5. xi. 85; *ibid.*, 10.

Taveta;<sup>1</sup> and in June Mr. J. W. Buchanan, accompanied by Martin, a Maltese sailor who had been with Thomson on his Kenya journey, arrived in the debatable country. At Moshi they interviewed Mandara who denied, as has been seen, that he had sold any land to Johnston. The Taveta transaction, on the other hand, was confirmed, and, leaving Martin in charge there, Buchanan returned to Zanzibar in September. His impressions of the Kilimanjaro area were not quite so rosy as Johnston's; but the climate certainly seemed healthy, and, while the local trade was at present negligible, the mountain slopes would 'prove of value as a sanatorium for the people of Zanzibar and the coast ports'.<sup>2</sup> No British foothold, however, apart from mission-stations, had been established on that high ground. Only the concession at Taveta had been made good, and Taveta lay several miles away from the *massif* in relatively low country.

So much for the British penetration of the interior. Meantime attention had been called, as it had often been called before, to the key-point on the northern half of the coast—Mombasa. Kitchener, it will be remembered, spent a day there on his way to Zanzibar, and he emphasised its strategic importance in a remarkable memorandum on the defence of British communications through the Suez Canal with India and Australia. He dealt with all the vital points on or near the route from Port Said to Aden—the need for a railway from Port Said to Suez, for the fortification of Perim, for the maintenance of the British position at Berbera, Zeila and Socotra, for a lighthouse at Cape Guardafui—and then examined the situation on the East African coast. The balance of power, he pointed out, had recently been altered by the acquisition by Germany of a harbour at Dar-es-Salaam and by France of an even finer harbour at Diego Suarez.<sup>3</sup> The British cable and coaling-station at Zanzibar would thus be endangered in the event of war. At Dar-es-Salaam, in particular, Germany would possess 'a close and convenient base which might be rapidly placed in a state of defence and from which much damage might be done in these seas'. He recommended, therefore, 'with a view to maintaining

<sup>1</sup> R. to K., 12. v. 86: K.P. XII. pt. v. 48.

<sup>2</sup> B. to Mackinnon, 9. ix. 86: K.P. XIII. pt. viii. 38.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 345, above.

our interests and protecting our position,' that Britain should obtain the same privileges at Mombasa as Germany had obtained at Dar-es-Salaam. 'It has not been forgotten that the English flag was once hoisted at Mombasa, and it would receive a warm welcome were it to reappear under arrangement with the Sultan. Mombasa is the most probable port from which any railway system for the opening-up of the interior would start, and its possession would give to England a commercial base, without which it would be impossible to develop the trade of Central Africa.' 'I can see no reason', Kitchener concluded, 'against acquiring this port. . . . There are no German interests at Mombasa, and not a single German subject resides there.'<sup>1</sup>

The Admiralty rejected the proposal apparently on grounds of expense, though, as Kitchener remarked, it had cost Germany nothing to obtain her rights at Dar-es-Salaam. But the Intelligence Branch of the War Office supported it,<sup>2</sup> and at the Foreign Office it was welcomed by Anderson at any rate. In due course Kirk was asked for his opinion. 'In discussing such a question as this,' he replied, 'one cannot assume that the relations of Germany and Zanzibar will long remain what they are or that our position will continue to be what it is. If Germany is to retain her protectorates inland, and of this there cannot any longer be a doubt, she will be compelled by the inevitable course of events to obtain possession of the coast opposite. Treaties, agreements, or commissions will all be powerless to stop her from obtaining by purchase, cession, or alliance, if not by more violent means, what she will then come to know is essential. . . . Nor will the occasion be difficult to find since she has to deal with an Oriental prince to whom are not accorded the usual rights prescribed by international law. The time is, in my opinion, not far distant when the Sultan's authority, unable to bear the constant strain to which it is now being exposed by a system of active intrigue, intimidation, and bribery, will give way. . . . In such a contingency, with German influence strong, Dar-es-Salaam being in her hands, Germany would be able at any moment, in case of war, to seize our coal and other stores

<sup>1</sup> *Notes by Lieutenant-Colonel Kitchener on British lines of communication with the Indian Ocean*, 22. xii. 85; K.P. XII. pt. iv. 50.

<sup>2</sup> *Memorandum on the proposal to obtain certain rights over the port of Mombasa in the Sultanate of Zanzibar*, by Major-General H. Brackenbury, 21. viii. 86: *ibid.*, 77.

here, and we should be compelled to abandon this coast and leave the enemy's ships unmolested, to sally out or pursue their trade as occasion offered. . . . The question to be decided is practically this: Whether we are prepared to see Germany paramount over all the Zanzibar coast, using the trading capacities of our Indian subjects to advance and develop her commerce, or whether some compromise cannot be come to whereby our influence is upheld and admitted as legitimately paramount over a certain district, without necessarily affecting the independence of the Sultan of Zanzibar so long as that State hangs together.<sup>1</sup>

That dispatch was one of the last Kirk wrote and one of the most incisive. It admirably rounded off the combination of arguments which had been gradually taking shape in favour of establishing some kind of British control over the northern part of mid-East Africa. From Owen's day onwards the occupation of Mombasa had been repeatedly proposed as a means of suppressing the Slave Trade on the coast.<sup>2</sup> Speke in 1856 had dreamed of British rule as a means of stopping slave-hunts in the neighbourhood of Lake Victoria.<sup>3</sup> Gordon had tried to get his short cut to the Indian Ocean in order to stop them on the upper Nile. On the eve of the Scramble Barghash had wanted all his mainland dominions to be put under British administration in order that their integrity might be preserved and their economic resources efficiently developed; and for a moment Mackinnon and his friends had welcomed the proposal. And now that the Scramble had come, Holmwood had seen his vision of a British colony in the Kenya Highlands, Hutton and Mackinnon had decided to seize the economic opportunity just before it was too late, and Kitchener had capped it all with a realistic reference to the strategy of the western Indian Ocean. But interwoven with all those later reasons for British action at Mombasa and in its hinterland was the simple reason—perhaps the decisive one—which formed the core of Kirk's dispatch. Was Germany to take the whole of a country in which Britain had so long possessed a greater interest and influence? Or should Britain have a part of it?

The policy of partition was thus gaining ground in British circles when in the autumn of 1886 Bismarck once more forced

<sup>1</sup> K. to R., 4. vi. 86: K.P. XIII. pt. vi. 8.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 168-9, 223-4 above.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 131 above.

the East African issue to the front. Towards the end of September it was reported from Zanzibar that the Sultan's Governor at Lamu had arrested a native servant of Denhardt's and kept him in prison for three months.<sup>1</sup> To Bismarck this seemed intolerably 'contemptuous treatment of us', and he talked of sending another expedition strong enough 'to win the position we desire and punish the Sultan's impertinence'.<sup>2</sup> In cooler blood he decided that the whole East African question had dragged on far too long and must be settled quickly, 'while the Egyptian excitement is still going on in France'.<sup>3</sup> Malet was informed, accordingly, that it was intended to send Dr. Krauel, a high official at the Foreign Office, to London without delay 'with the idea of bringing the affairs of Zanzibar to a satisfactory conclusion'.<sup>4</sup> This communication was accompanied by a characteristic turn of the screw. Bismarck—so Malet was told—regarded the British attitude on the question as so 'unfriendly' that he had been reluctantly compelled 'to abandon the policy to which he had always been attached and to seek the friendship of France'. If Britain, however, would help him at Zanzibar, he would support her against France in Egypt.<sup>5</sup>

Krauel arrived in London on October 14 and set to work with Anderson to draft a comprehensive agreement. Its chances were more promising than those of the Commission; for Krauel was a far abler and wiser diplomat than Schmidt, and, more important, Bismarck's territorial ambitions were not quite so expansive as those of Peters and his company. Before the negotiations began he insisted on British support of his 'taking possession' of Dar-es-Salaam with the right to establish a German customs-house, while recognising the Sultan's ultimate authority and paying him tribute—a sort of lease, in fact—and also on British recognition of Schmidt's decision about Gasi.<sup>6</sup> But, when Hatzfeldt reported from London that the British Government seemed anxious for a settlement 'if only we do not make too

<sup>1</sup> Iddesleigh to Holmwood, 8. x. 86: K.P. XIII. pt. vii. 8; Memorandum by Herbert Bismarck, 2. x. 86: *G.P.* iv. 151, (G.D.D. i. 225).

<sup>2</sup> Memorandum by Count zu Rantzau, 29. ix. 86: *G.P.* iv. 150 (G.D.D. i. 224).

<sup>3</sup> Hatzfeldt to Bismarck, with the latter's minute, 22. ix. 86: *ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Memorandum by Herbert Bismarck, 2. x. 86: *G.P.* iv. 151, (G.D.D. i. 225).

<sup>5</sup> Malet to Iddesleigh, 2. x. 86: K.P. XIII. pt. vii. 2.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

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great demands', he minuted on the dispatch: 'This fault of our colonial jingoes, whose covetousness goes far beyond what we need or are capable of absorbing, must be carefully avoided.'<sup>1</sup> A settlement, then, was possible, and in less than a fortnight it was reached. On October 26 the 'points of agreement' were approved by Iddesleigh, and on October 29 Hatzfeldt told him that they had also been approved by the German Government.<sup>2</sup>

The provisions of the agreement were as follows: (1) Britain and Germany recognise the Sultan's authority over the islands of Zanzibar, Pemba, Mafia and Lamu, over the coast from the River Mninjani to Kipini to a depth of ten miles, and over the towns of Kismayu, Barawa, Merka and Mogadishu with radii of ten miles and of Warsheikh with a radius of five miles. (2) Britain will support German negotiations with the Sultan for the lease of the customs-duties at Dar-es-Salaam and Pangani to the German East African Company. (3) The territory between the Rovuma and the Tana Rivers is to be divided into a German and a British 'sphere of influence', the line between them being drawn from the mouth of the River Umba (near Vanga) to Lake Jipe, and thence between the districts of Chagga and Taveta to 'the northern base of the Kilimanjaro range', and thence to the point at which the 1st degree of south latitude strikes the east side of Lake Victoria. Within these 'spheres' the two Powers agree 'not to make acquisitions of territory except protectorates', nor to 'interfere' with each other's 'extension of influence' in its own sphere. (4) Britain will 'use her good offices to promote a friendly arrangement of the rival claims of the Sultan and the German East African Company to the Kilimanjaro districts'. (5) The two Powers recognise the coast between Kipini and the northern extremity of Manda Bay as the coast of Witu. (6) They will jointly invite the Sultan to accede to the

<sup>1</sup> H. to B., 19. x. 86: *G.P.* iv. 154 (*G.D.D.* i. 227). When Malet complained a few days later of two unsigned articles in the *Kölnische Zeitung* in which it was said that Britain and Germany were having a colonial quarrel, especially in East Africa, Herbert Bismarck agreed they should be stopped and said they 'emanated from writers whom his father termed the "colonial jingoes"', but they were very difficult to keep within bounds, and that they gave a great deal of trouble'. M. to I., 23. x. 86: *K.P.* XIII. pt. vii. 20. Kirk pencilled in his copy of this dispatch: 'Dr. Schweinfurth was the author in question.'

<sup>2</sup> *Points of Agreement*, etc., approved, 26. x. 86: *ibid.*, 21. H. to I., 29. x. 86: *ibid.*, 23. *S.P.* lxvii (1885-6), 1130.

Berlin Act with the reservation of his rights under Article I. (7) Germany will adhere to the Anglo-French Declaration of 1862.<sup>1</sup>

This settlement might be called a compromise in so far as all the German claims, as defined in the Commission's 'unanimous' report, had not been conceded. Schmidt's demarcation of the seaboard strip from Tungi to Formosa Bay had been straightened out to a continuous ten-mile width; and the Gasi corridor and the approach to the sea at Bagamoyo had been given up. Kitchener's and Lemaire's strip of coast, on the other hand, had been forty miles deep—a substantial difference. And on three other cardinal points Germany's will had prevailed. On the first, the German control of Dar-es-Salaam, the British Government had already yielded, and the addition of Pangani was of no great practical importance; but on the other two points Kitchener's carefully argued case had been completely abandoned. The Simba-Denhardt scheme had come to fruition. Not only was Witu taken from the Sultan, but it was given its own access to the sea, so that the British 'sphere of influence' was bordered on both sides by territory under German control. Secondly, the Sultan's claims in the interior—at Tabora, Ujiji, Kilimanjaro and anywhere else—had clearly gone by the board. For what hope was there of his maintaining his rights anywhere in a territory which was now declared to be in all but name a European Power's protectorate, and was soon to be occupied by a European administration and European troops? 'Good offices', a 'friendly arrangement'—such phrases were scarcely in character with the quiet realism of the rest of the document. Taken as a whole, in fact, the settlement was an unquestionable triumph for Bismarck. But it was not won at those official meetings in Whitehall. It had been won long before—at the time of the fall of Khartum. And if Britain had saved something from the wreck of her old-established position in East Africa—something on which a new position was presently to be built up—it was only because Bismarck in the hour of victory had shown himself the great *Realpolitiker* he was. He had set his face against the extreme demands of his 'colonial jingoes' because he knew that, while he could do anything he chose to the Sultan of Zanzibar, there was a limit to what he could do to Britain.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

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It remained to bring France into the picture. Iddesleigh proposed that she should be invited to join in that part of the agreement which defined the extent of the Sultan's dominions, but Bismarck preferred that the French Government should only be told about it. In order to make the communication more friendly, it might be accompanied by a recognition of France's protectorate over the Comoro Islands, to which the Sultan of Zanzibar had on a former occasion asserted shadowy rights. Iddesleigh assented, and after some delay, the French Government declared that 'they did not object to the Zanzibar delimitation project'.<sup>1</sup>

Only one thing now needed to be done in order to complete the new dispensation in East Africa, and it was the easiest thing of all. The Anglo-German settlement had just to be imposed on the Sultan, as the *Schutzbrief* and the Treaties had been imposed. From the time, nearly two years ago now, when Peters first came to Zanzibar and the dissolution of his realm began, his wishes had never been consulted, nor even his opinion asked. He had been told to take it or leave it with the comment, addressed to him by Kirk from time to time with such sympathy and courtesy, no doubt, as he could command, that it would be wise for him to take it. In the last phase of the long contest he had not even been informed of his fate. Mathews had been virtually ejected from the sittings of the Commission, and there was no room, of course, for a representative of Zanzibar in Whitehall. Is it to be wondered at if he made a little difficulty, if he asked for a little time, before he acquiesced in the final ultimatum which was to rob him, as he saw it, of all his dominions on the mainland, by the sea or inland, except for that narrow strip of coast, and to set German power firmly, almost at his door, in Majid's 'harbour of peace'.

One point was put to him first—his adherence to the Berlin Act; and to that he assented without demur, since it gave the sanction of international law to his fiscal authority in his sea-board strip. Under Article I he was entitled, like the Portuguese Government in Mozambique, to reserve his right to levy duties

<sup>1</sup> I. to Hatzfeldt, 1. xi. 86; Malet to I., 6. xi. 86; I. to M., 8. xi. 86; I. to Scott, 10. xii. 86; K.P. XIII. pt. vii. 26, 31-2, 80. For Bismarck's previous suggestion as to the Comoro Islands, see p. 464, above.



## DELIMITATION AND PARTITION

on the transit-trade.<sup>1</sup> But the rest of the Anglo-German Agreement was not presented to him at once because the Foreign Office wanted first to secure French assent, and that, as has been seen, took time. In the middle of November Bismarck made his impatience so evident that Anderson suspected some sinister design. 'Why are they insisting', he asked, 'on the immediate negotiation of a settlement with the Sultan?' The answer, he thought, was a wish 'to hustle the Sultan into an attitude of antagonism'.<sup>2</sup>

'Haste and pressure' in negotiations, as a junior official pointed out in a minute on this note, are regarded in the East as 'the extremity of unfriendliness' and might well give offence in India—a tardy and isolated reference to the Indian aspect of the question. But whatever the motives or the methods of Bismarck's hustle, the Foreign Office was soon induced to join in it. On November 26 Malet reported from Berlin that the German consul-general had been told to ask the Sultan to permit forthwith the collection of customs-duties at the ports of the East African Company and that the time had come for the British Government to use those 'good offices' about Kilimanjaro.<sup>3</sup> On December 2 Holmwood, who was acting as consul-general after Kirk's departure, explained the delimitation clauses of the agreement to Barghash. It was not the old Barghash. His vigour and efficiency, his interest in the welfare of his realm, were gone. For some time past, Holmwood said, he had 'entirely neglected public business'. All his thoughts, it seemed, were now taken up with private affairs and 'the acquirement of ready money'.<sup>4</sup> Nor was there anyone now to help him. The Mlawas of an earlier day might at least have fired his old temper or awakened his old pride; but the Arabs he now leaned on were feckless and incompetent folk.<sup>5</sup> When the last blow fell, however, Barghash did not immediately submit. On December 3 he sent personal telegrams to Bismarck and Iddesleigh asking for 'six months for consideration'.<sup>6</sup> The latter answered first. On

<sup>1</sup> Holmwood to I., 8. xi. 86: *ibid.*, 32; and see p. 406, above. The German consul-general told Barghash that by adherence to the Act he had lost his rights to transit-duties, but this was corrected by Bismarck: H. to I., 15. xi. 86; Malet to I., 16. xi. 86: *ibid.*, 35, 36A.

<sup>2</sup> Memorandum by Anderson, 16. xi. 86: *ibid.*, 36D.

<sup>3</sup> M. to I., 26. xi. 86: *ibid.*, 62.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> H. to I., 9. x. 86: *ibid.*, 44.

<sup>6</sup> Sultan to I., 3. xii. 86: *ibid.*, 72.

December 6 he cabled: 'No extension can be given. We have done our best in Your Highness' behalf. Our friendly advice is that you should accept at once. Your interests would be endangered by delay.'<sup>1</sup> Kirk, now at home, was asked to send a personal message to the Sultan in the same sense.<sup>2</sup> Bismarck, it was understood, was about to telegraph a similar reply to the request for time. But no more hustling was needed. On December 7 Barghash agreed to 'virtually all the terms of the Anglo-German partition'.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I. to Sultan, 6. xii. 86: *ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> Minute by Iddesleigh, 7. xii. 86: *ibid.*, 76.

<sup>3</sup> H. to I., 7. xii. 86: *ibid.*

## XX

### EPILOGUE

(1886-1890)

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'We have had a rough time of it this year,' Kirk wrote to Wylde in March 1886, 'and I have certainly extended my experience.' The trouble, he went on, was the old trouble—the 'trying and unsatisfactory' position in which he had been placed ever since the publication of the *Schutzbrief*. It was not only his strong personal feelings about the fate which had befallen the Sultan and his realm: it was also the uneasy consciousness that, however strictly he obeyed his orders, his presence at Zanzibar was a jarring note in the Anglo-German harmony which his Government so evidently desired. It was true, of course. Bismarck had quickly realised that he had more to fear in Zanzibar than in London; and, though his suspicions had been blunted for a time by Salisbury's assurances, they were sharpened again by his agents' reports in the early months of 1886. Kirk's friendly relations with Knorr and Travers<sup>1</sup> had shown that he could dislike German policy without disliking Germans; but Schmidt and Arendt, who succeeded Travers as consul-general,<sup>2</sup> were different, and they did their best to make trouble about Kirk in Berlin. Arendt described his attitude in the Gasi affair as 'vexatious', and both Arendt and Schmidt, in reporting on the proceedings of the Commission, took the paradoxical view that Kirk's influence with the Sultan had 'degraded its work to the level of a farce'. These charges revived all Bismarck's earlier

<sup>1</sup> Travers wrote to Kirk after leaving Zanzibar, expressing his 'sincere attachment' and hoping for an opportunity of proving it; T. to K., 23. i. 86: K.P. XIII. pt. vi. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Arendt had served as vice-consul at Cairo and then on the international Danube Commission. His colleagues' candid opinion of him is given in P. Sanderson to Anderson, 15. xi. 85: K.P. XII. pt. iii. 26.

## EPILOGUE

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mistrust, and he wrote angrily to Hatzfeldt about 'Sir John Kirk's activities'.<sup>1</sup> Kirk was informed of these complaints, but he was not allowed to think that the confidence of the Foreign office was impaired. In January 1886 Salisbury recommended him for a G.C.M.G.,<sup>2</sup> and, when a rumour got about that he was soon to be replaced by the Resident at Aden, it was promptly and emphatically denied.<sup>3</sup> Rosebery, too, though his German sympathies were more marked than Salisbury's, could be trusted not to let Kirk down. Nevertheless it was an uncomfortable situation. 'I am held responsible', Kirk told Wylde, 'for things I have no power to control and am often helpless to guide the Sultan.' By the end of March he felt that he had done all he could do, at any rate at the moment. The Commercial Treaty was soon to be signed. The Commission was well on with its work, and Kitchener's views were in full agreement with his own. And, if the swift success of the German assault on East Africa had weakened and tarnished British prestige at Zanzibar, it had not quite destroyed it. 'I have kept our influence supreme through all, and can fairly ask for leave when the new treaty is signed.'<sup>4</sup> He did not have to ask for it. In June he received a private letter from Rosebery saying that his presence in London 'would be of the greatest value'. 'With a mail once a month we are not in a position to communicate freely on the state of affairs, and your guidance and knowledge would be of inestimable service in dealing with the Germans. But an even more important consideration is whether you can be spared from Zanzibar. As to this I can offer no opinion. But in my mind it is the first object, and your assistance here is secondary to it.'<sup>5</sup> So the decision was left to Kirk, and for the reasons just given he had already made it. In July, when the farce of the Commission had been played out, at last he turned his back on Zanzibar.

He was glad to go, and he may have guessed he would not come back; but, as his year of leave drew on, it seemed that he might still be wanted. 'I may have to return again to Zanzibar

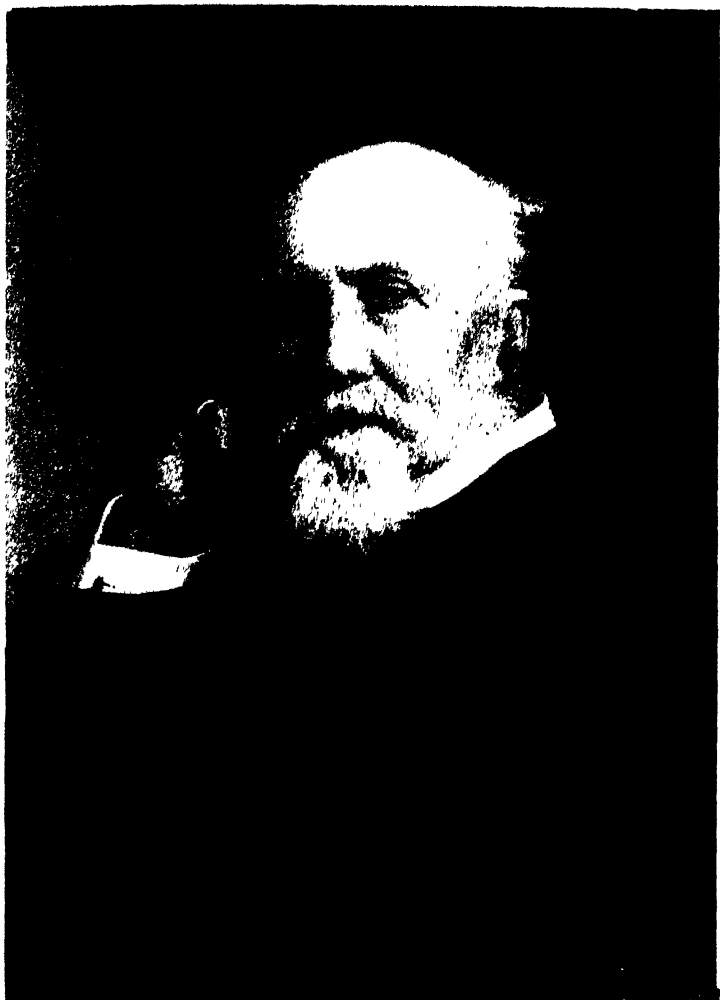
<sup>1</sup> B. to H., 21. iv. 86: *G.P.* iv. 145 (G.D.D. i. 219).

<sup>2</sup> S. to K., 27. i. 86: *K.P. misc.*

<sup>3</sup> K. to S., 8. i. 86; S. to K., 9. i. 86: *K.P.* XII. pt. iv. 10-11.

<sup>4</sup> K. to W., 24. iii. 86: in private ownership.

<sup>5</sup> R. to K., 21. v. 86: *K.P. misc.*



SIR JOHN KIRK, G.C.M.G., K.C.B.  
after his retirement



before long,' he wrote to a friend in the spring of 1887; 'Lord Salisbury wishes it, but my return is disliked by Bismarck and he has quite as much to say in our political appointments as our own Government.'<sup>1</sup> That is the only complaint Kirk left on record as to the manner in which his long career at Zanzibar was ended, and there was more than a grain of truth in it.<sup>2</sup> He was not, of course, dismissed or offered a post elsewhere. He was simply not pressed to go back. And probably he was not sorry. What was the use of his resuming that 'unsatisfactory position'? So it was presently arranged that he should retire on grounds of health.

Barghash had not to wait much longer for relief from his still more unsatisfactory position. Holmwood described him in March 1887—he was then only fifty—as 'on the verge of distraction and for the time quite unequal to facing his difficulties'. A year later he was dead. The precautions promptly taken by Mathews and his troops prevented an outbreak of the customary disturbances, and on the day Barghash died, March 27, 1888, Seyyid Khalifa, one of his younger brothers, was quietly installed as his successor.<sup>3</sup>

It would needlessly prolong the story of this book to describe in detail the immediate sequel to the Anglo-German Agreement of 1886. That agreement had determined the fate of East Africa for a generation on the basis of partition, and in the course of the next four years partition was duly carried out, with one important change in its original form.

This operation was preceded by two disturbing acts of vio-

<sup>1</sup> K. to Dyer, 1. iv. 87: Kew, *English Letters, 1866-1900*.

<sup>2</sup> In March 1887 Bismarck demanded the withdrawal of Holmwood on the ground that he was working against German interests, and intimating that, if this request were refused, he would make trouble in Egypt. When Salisbury replied that 'he could not answer offhand a communication of such importance, involving moreover a threat', Bismarck apologised in the following interesting terms: 'I beg to explain to Lord Salisbury that here we contemplate no threat, but merely the principle that in foreign policy one is guided not by feelings, but by interest and reciprocity. Kindness without return only occurs in private life.' Nevertheless Holmwood was superseded a few months later. *G.P.* iv. 165-72 (*G.D.D.* i. 237-9). *K.P.* XIII. pt. ix. 92.

<sup>3</sup> H. to S., 14. iii. 87: *K.P.* XIII. pt. ix. 15. Euan Smith to S., 27. iii. 88: *Further Correspondence respecting Germany and Zanzibar*, Africa No. 10 (1888), C.-5603. See also Lync, *An Apostle of Empire*, 90-1. Barghash himself had wished one of his sons to succeed him under regency: see p. 377, above.

lence. In December 1886 Jühlke was murdered at Kismayu by a Somali for no evident reason. The alleged culprit was arrested by the Governor, sent to Zanzibar, and tried and sentenced to imprisonment for life. Under threat of naval action Barghash agreed to his execution on the scene of his crime.<sup>1</sup> In the following February the Governor-General of Mozambique presented an ultimatum requiring the Sultan to recognise the Rovuma as the Portuguese frontier within twenty-four hours. On his refusal a Portuguese squadron proceeded to Tungi Bay, captured one of the Sultan's ships, and bombarded the villages of Tungi and Mninjani for five days. Their inhabitants, including British Indian traders, took refuge in the 'bush'. On the fifth day Portuguese troops landed and burned what remained of the villages. Once more the Sultan had to submit.<sup>2</sup>

Meantime a company had been formed in England, called the British East African Association, with Mackinnon as chairman and Buxton, Hutton and Pelly among the directors, to operate in the British 'sphere of influence'; and in February 1887 Barghash agreed in principle to grant it a concession covering all his mainland territories from Vanga to Kipini on similar terms to those of the 1878 draft. On May 24 the concession was signed. On September 3, 1888, the Association, now called the Imperial British East Africa Company, obtained a royal charter. With the help of Mathews, whose services were lent by Barghash, the Company's headquarters were established at Mombasa; an advance post was set up at Machakos, treaties concluded with the Nyika, Kamba and Taita tribes, and preparations made for the 'effective occupation' of the interior.<sup>3</sup>

The parallel concession to the German East African Company, dealing on similar lines with the Sultan's territories south of the River Umba, had been accepted in principle by Barghash at the same time; but it was not actually signed till April 28, 1888, when Khalifa had come to the throne. On November 22 the Witu area was declared a German protectoraté. Peters, meanwhile, had been establishing a number of administrative and trading posts on the mainland, but his operations were re-

<sup>1</sup> K.P. XIII. pt. viii. 29-58.

<sup>2</sup> *Further Correspondence relating to Zanzibar*, Africa No. 1 (1888), C.-5315.

<sup>3</sup> An additional concession, confirming and extending the previous one, was signed by Khalifa on October 9, 1888. Texts in McDermott, 457-69.



## EPILOGUE

garded with growing resentment by the Arabs and Swahili of the coast, and in August 1888, a few months after Vohsen had come out to take Peters' place as director-in-chief of the Company, they broke out in armed revolt, led by a Swahili chief, Bushiri.<sup>1</sup> The situation was so serious that Bismarck was obliged to send a German fleet to the rescue of the Company. In order, as he said, to enforce on the Germans 'such moderation as suits our ideas' and in particular to prevent them drawing the Sultan into the quarrel and perhaps bombarding Zanzibar, Salisbury sent British ships to establish a joint blockade with the German ships.<sup>2</sup> To make this international demonstration more impressive the Portuguese Government closed the coast of Mozambique to trade in arms and ammunition, and the Italian Government dispatched a cruiser to take part in the Anglo-German blockade. Despite these measures the rebellion was not extinguished on the northern part of the German coast till Bushiri was caught and hanged in December 1889, and it smouldered on along the southern part of the coast and in the interior till the following summer. At the beginning of 1889 Bismarck publicly censured the proceedings of the Company, obtained a grant of two million marks (£100,000) from the Reichstag, and appointed Wissmann as *Reichskommissar* in full control of the Company's policy and personnel.

Before this difficult time on the coast was over, Peters had created a diversion in the interior. The Anglo-German Agreement had left the western limits of the two 'spheres of influence' unfixed, and Peters conceived the idea of extending the Witu Protectorate to the west and then to the south so as to create a huge German territory linking up Lakes Victoria and Tanganyika and completely encircling the British sphere. A pretext was available in the supposedly desperate plight of the unhappy and elusive Emin Pasha, to whose relief Stanley had begun his march to the upper Nile by the Congo route at the beginning of 1887. Defying his own Government, who were opposed to this breach of the spirit, if not the letter, of the bargain of 1886, and violating the blockade, Peters landed at Witu in June 1889 and

<sup>1</sup> A full account of the Arab revolt is given in the dispatches printed in *Further Correspondence respecting Germany and Zanzibar*, Africa No. 1 (1889), C.-5822. See also R. Schmidt, *Geschichte der Araberaufstandes in Ostafrika* (Frankfurt, 1892).

<sup>2</sup> S. to Goschen, 14. x. 88: *Life*, iv. 236.

## EPILOGUE

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led a well-armed expedition up the Tana and over the Kenya Highlands into Uganda. Before he started, a British expedition led by F. J. Jackson had set out in the same direction on the same quest; but Peters caught it up, though he never came in contact with it, and a long series of treaties was capped by an agreement with King Mwanga. In the autumn of 1890, however, while in the neighbourhood of Lake Victoria, he learned that a second Anglo-German agreement had robbed his work of all its fruit.

The Agreement of 1890 was determined, like that of 1886, by the politics of Europe. The first agreement favoured Germany because Britain wanted German friendship at that moment more than Germany wanted British. The second agreement favoured Britain for the opposite reason. France, it is true, was still pressing for the British evacuation of Egypt; but there was no question now of German intervention on her side. From 1886 onwards Bismarck had become more and more afraid lest the greatest danger that could threaten his new Empire, a war with France and Russia, might materialise; and he made, accordingly, a series of overtures to Salisbury which culminated in the formal offer of a defensive alliance against France in 1889. Naturally, therefore, Salisbury's attitude on colonial issues stiffened. Claims that had previously been ignored or suppressed could now be safely asserted. 'The English and Indian interests', he told Malet, 'are both too strong' to allow of Bismarck having a free hand at Zanzibar.<sup>1</sup> And Bismarck for his part was now quite prepared to make concessions in East Africa if he could get a valuable makeweight in return. Germany, he declared in 1889, has had enough of 'colonial quarrels and flag-hoistings', and for himself he had never been a *Kolonialmensch*.<sup>2</sup> So, since the makeweight was ready to hand in Heligoland, a new and final bargain was easily struck a few months after Bismarck's dismissal. Under the agreement signed on July 1, 1890, Germany (1) recognised the British protectorate over Zanzibar, (2) abandoned her protectorate over Witu and all her claims on the coast or inland north of the River Tana, and (3) accepted the extension of the frontier dividing the two 'spheres of influence'

<sup>1</sup> S. to M., 18. ix. 88: *Life*, iv. 234-5.

<sup>2</sup> Townsend, 115. Herbert Bismarck wrote to Hatzfeldt, 'Salisbury's friendship is worth more to us than the whole of East Africa': *ibid*.

## EPILOGUE

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westwards to Lake Victoria and across it to the boundary of the Congo Free State.<sup>1</sup> Britain, besides ceding Heligoland and agreeing to alterations of boundaries in West and South-West Africa, undertook to use her influence with the Sultan to 'cede absolutely' to Germany the portion of the mainland already leased to the German East African Company in return for an 'equitable indemnity'.<sup>2</sup>

As the result of this agreement Germany, having paid Khalifa the cheap price of four million marks (£200,000) for his ten-mile strip of coastland, the whole of the area between Mozambique and the British 'sphere' became German East Africa. The British Protectorate of Zanzibar was proclaimed on November 4, 1890, but the ten-mile strip between Vanga and the River Juba was still held in lease, and is now known as the Kenya Protectorate. The inland territory which was occupied by the British East Africa Company became the British East Africa Protectorate and is now divided into the Uganda Protectorate and Kenya Colony.

Arrangements with Italy and France completed the international settlement. Italy, who by agreement with Britain and the Sultan had occupied the Benadir ports in 1889, established a protectorate northwards of the Juba in 1891. France agreed at the end of 1890 that the Declaration of 1862 should be superseded by the East African clauses of a new Anglo-French convention which recognised on the one hand the British Protectorate of Zanzibar and on the other hand the French Protectorate of Madagascar.

In these territorial negotiations and adjustments Kirk, of course, could take no part. He was fully occupied, indeed, in 1889 and 1890 in a more congenial task. At the British Government's suggestion King Leopold had convoked an international conference on the African Slave Trade, and Kirk was appointed a British plenipotentiary. Knowing far more about the subject than any of his colleagues, he was the leading figure in the protracted, intricate, and sometimes ill-humoured discussions

<sup>1</sup> The southern frontier of the German 'sphere' was also defined—along the line of the Rovuma to the northern part of Lake Nyasa and thence to Lake Tanganyika.

<sup>2</sup> Text in *S.P.* lxxxii (1889-90), 35-47. The boundaries are shown on the map at the end of this book.

which resulted in the signing of the Brussels Act—an undertaking by seventeen Governments, including nearly all those of Europe and that of the United States, to do what each could to stamp out the Trade to the last remnant in every corner of Africa. Apart from an inquiry into disturbances on the Brass River in Nigeria in 1895, Kirk's further services to Africa were unofficial. He was a director of the Imperial British East Africa Company from its foundation in 1888 and helped to steer it through the critical period of Captain F. D. Lugard's occupation of Uganda.<sup>1</sup> 'With all its failings', he wrote to Lugard, when it was wound up in 1895, 'it has been an honest concern, not a money-making one, and but for its work we should not now possess a footing in East Africa.'<sup>2</sup>

For the rest of his life—and he lived till his ninetieth year—Kirk continued in his home at Sevenoaks to keep in touch with Africa. He was a copious letter-writer, and there were few among the rising generation of African administrators who were not among his correspondents. Some of them became his personal friends, sharing his African thoughts and hopes, and to one of them in particular he may be said to have handed on his torch. 'I had for him', writes Lord Lugard, 'a deep affection which I know was reciprocated. He was to me the ideal of a wise and sympathetic administrator on whom I endeavoured to model my own action and to whose inexhaustible fund of knowledge I constantly appealed.'

When Kirk died on January 15, 1922, the East African situation had changed once more. Germany had staked her colonial possessions on the chances of war and lost them. With violence and bloodshed that British occupation of all mid-East Africa had come about which could have happened forty years earlier without a quarrel or a shot. But its meaning now was different. By 1922 a more fundamental change had occurred in the relations between Europe and East Africa than a change of flags. The future of East Africa had been at last identified with the future of the East Africans. For most of Kirk's time at Zanzibar

<sup>1</sup> Kirk also served as vice-chairman of the Uganda Railway Committee which supervised the building of the line from Mombasa till it reached Lake Victoria in 1902.

<sup>2</sup> Communicated by Lord Lugard.

## EPILOGUE

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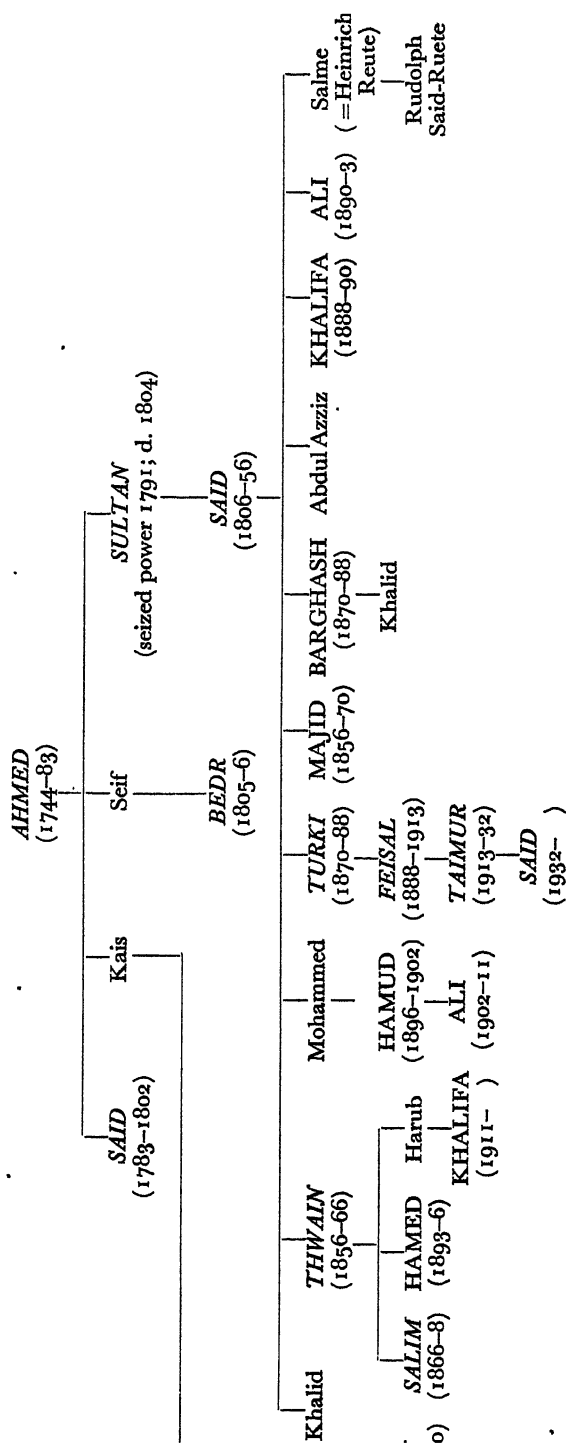
the dominant motive of British policy had been to help those helpless people; but it had been, so to speak, a negative motive—to save them and their country from destruction by the Slave Trade—and in the years of the Scramble it had been overlaid by other motives, economic, political, strategic. Between 1890 and 1914, however, it had become dominant once more, and now it was positive. The occupation of the interior had involved the government of its inhabitants, and it had been recognised that the primary purpose of that government, as of all government in theory, was to promote the welfare of the governed. By 1914 the old school of 'imperialism', which thought in terms of ruling and subject races and regarded tropical colonies as possessions, property, estates to be exploited by their owners, was already out of date; and when the issues of war and peace compelled a re-examination and readjustment of international relations, it seemed plain that the black peoples, for all their backwardness, could not be treated as a race apart, denied for all time the opportunities of 'life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness' accorded to all other peoples. The difference between condemning individual Africans to a life of slavery and keeping African communities in permanent political and economic subjection now seemed a matter of degree. To decide the fate of Africa without considering the interests of the only people who had a natural right to be there, to slice it up as if it were as inanimate as the map on which the boundaries were drawn, to 'barter' millions of Africans 'about from sovereignty to sovereignty as if they were mere chattels and pawns in a game'—such practices, it seemed, were part of an old order which the war was to bring to an end; and among the post-war dreams of a new age of freedom and good fellowship among the peoples of the world was the dream of the backward peoples being helped to make the best of their own lives in their own lands and enabled, as time went on, to take their proper place as members of international society. On July 22, 1922, a few months after Kirk's death, the Council of the League of Nations defined and confirmed the Mandate conferred on Britain for the southern part of mid-East Africa or Tanganyika, and in the following year the British Government declared that the principle of the Mandate equally applied to the northern part or Kenya. Thus the British people were invested with

## EPILOGUE

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a trust for East Africa. They were pledged, as the Mandate requires, 'to promote to the utmost the material and moral well-being and the social progress of its inhabitants' and to help them, as the Covenant implies, in course of time 'to stand by themselves' in the world. Those were genuine undertakings. Their fulfilment belongs to the future Livingstone believed in, 'the good time coming yet for Africa and for the world'.

# THE ALBUSAID RULERS OF MUSCAT AND ZANZIBAR



of Muscat: *AHMED*  
of Zanzibar: *MAJID*

Based on W. H. Ingrams' *Chronology and Genealogies of Zanzibar Rulers* (Zanzibar, 1926).

## ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE FOOTNOTES

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- D.D.F. *Documents Diplomatiques Français*, 1871-1914 (Paris, 1929 onwards).
- F.O. Foreign Office Records. Public Record Office.
- G.D. 29 Granville Papers. Public Record Office.
- G.D.D. *German Diplomatic Documents, 1871-1914.* ed. E.T.S. Dugdale (London, 1928 onwards).
- G.P. *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette* (Berlin, 1922 onwards).
- I.O. India Office Records.
- J.R.G.S. *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society.*
- P.P. Parliamentary (Sessional) Papers.
- P.R.G.S. *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society.*
- S.P. *British and Foreign State Papers* (London, 1841 onwards).

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K.P. A series of volumes of printed documents which belonged to Sir John Kirk. The originals are preserved in the Public Record Office.

- K.P. I. *Zanzibar, 1866-72.*  
     a. 1866. b. 1867. c. 1868. d. 1869. e. 1870. f. 1871.  
     g. 1872.
- II. *Zanzibar, 1873.*
- III. a. *Frere Mission.* b. *Correspondence with H.M.'s Ministers Abroad, etc.*
- IV. *Zanzibar, 1874.*
- V. *Zanzibar, 1875-80.*  
     a. 1875. b. 1876. c. 1879.
- VI. *Zanzibar, 1877-78.*  
     a. 1877. b. 1878.



## ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE FOOTNOTES

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- VII. *Slave Trade Correspondence, 1880.*
- VIII. *Slave Trade Correspondence, 1881.*
- IX. *Slave Trade Correspondence, 1882.*
- X. *Slave Trade Correspondence, 1883-84.*
  - a. 1883. b. 1884-85 and appendix.
- XI. *Zanzibar: Emin Pasha.*
  - a. 1886. b. 1887. c. *Papers respecting the Relief of Emin Bey.*
- XII. *Germany and Zanzibar, 1885-86.* Parts i-v.
- XIII. *Germany and Zanzibar, 1886-87.* Parts vi-ix.
- XIV. *Slave Trade Conference at Brussels, 1889.*
- XV. *Papers respecting the Greffulhe Coinage Concession, 1892-93.*
- misc.* Miscellaneous papers, printed and MS.



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# MID - EAST AFRICA

